Where Do the Communists Stand?

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September 12, 1939

NEW MASSES

The Meaning of This War

An Editorial Article

Chamberlain's Future

A Cable from London by Theodore Draper

Chicago Hearst: A Strike Epic

by Robert Terrall

Censoring 'The Grapes of Wrath'

by Samuel Sillen

CARTOONS BY GROPPER, RICHTER, REA, REINHARDT, HILTON

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Between Ourselves

THIS issue appears a day late because it was vital that we have the very latest news before going to press. Otherwise the Labor Day holiday would have forced us to go to press early and miss the late developments.

NM is on a war basis. For the past two weeks we have been making plans for bringing you the best coverage of European events that the conditions of war and consorship will allow. By cable and *Yankee Clipper* we will have articles from our correspondents abroad. Theodore Draper will remain in London, sending us full reports on all British angles. Richard Goodman, who remained in Paris up to the Allies' declaration of war, has gone back to London, where the censorship, apparently, is less severe. As soon as it is feasible he will write for us on what he observed in France. Goodman and others will be in Paris from time to time, keeping themselves informed of events on that side of the Channel. We are trying to reach more correspondents at other points as quickly as possible. R. Palme Dutt and others who have contributed to NM before will soon be on the contributors' roster.

We have been reading with considerable amusement but no surprise the dark fictions in the fink press the collapse of the Communist Party after the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact; never before in history has there been so much pity and solicitude for the poor Bolsheviks. This futile attempt to panic Communist Party members and sympathizers comes from all directions, from the *New Republic* to the Hearst press. What is actually happening may be partially indicated by the reactions to our special "Guide to the Crisis" issue last week. We have received exactly four adverse reactions to the issue and almost a hundred letters of praise. John Stuart's letter is typical of the latter:

"The current one is a heroic issue. I know something of the obstacles facing the staff but despite them you have come out with banners flying. Let the liberals whimper and convulse in the streets. NEW MASSES cannot be taken in by this manufactured wave of hysteria. If I can help in one way or another, please call on me."

Major Allen Johnson, military authority who fought with the International Brigade in Spain, will contribute regularly to NM on the military aspects of the European conflict, beginning with his "War Bulletin" in this issue. Major Johnson's analyses will be accompanied by the latest military maps.

Joseph North's examination of the way the reactionary press has handled international news since the signing of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact has been postponed until next week due to the war news.

NM has had some opportunity of checking up on the assertions of the capitalist press that the friends of the Soviet Union in this country have been thrown into confusion and discouragement by the Soviet-German pact. Last weekend NM editors North, Magil, and Rovere spoke to an aggregate of about two thousand at Camps Unity, Beacon, and Followers of the Trail. All three report that the questions asked them reflected an eagerness for detail and amplification rather than any querulousness over the decision made by the Soviet Union. People were in fundamental agreement with the pact, but they did want more on its background and on its effects throughout the world. We can't speak for other countries, for France and England, but judging from our own experiences and from the reports of our correspondents, the situation is the same throughout the world.

Another comment on our special crisis issue of last week comes from M. C. S. of Manhattan: "I must write you how profoundly grateful I am that we have a NEW MASSES—at all times, but this last issue dealing with the Russo-German pact is magnificent. After reading every word of it I bought six more copies and sent them to friends who will have no other way of knowing what is the real meaning of the pact; certainly they won't learn it from the capitalist press or from the radio!"

James Dugan is sitting in his corner with a dazed expression after receiving a letter from a Hollywood reader, on his review of *When Tomorrow Comes,* which includes a truthful strike sequence. Our critic asked for a special labor award for Dwight Taylor and James M. Cain who were credited with the screen play. The letter reveals that no less than *twenty-seven writers* were involved in the script, and the strike sequence was actually written by numbers fifteen and seventeen, Francis Faragoh and Albert Bein. Our informant tells that the combined office space of the twenty-seven covered more than one-sixth of the surface of the Universal lot and the inhabitants were popularly known as the Stahlinites. John Stahl directed *When Tomorrow Comes.*

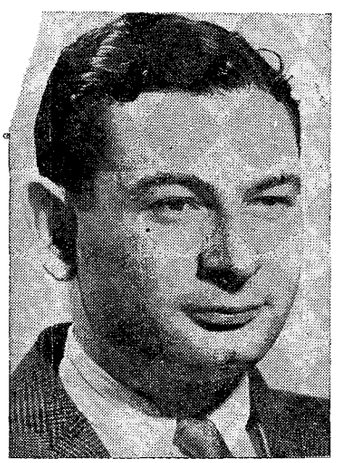
When you come back after your vacation to find an ominous pile of letters, all of which look like bills, do not overlook the possibility that one of them is NM asking your renewal. We'd appreciate action on this matter.

Who's Who

LEW LEVENSON, who has contributed before to NM, worked in Hollywood for a number of years, and was for some time a Broadway press agent. . . . Robert Terrall's article in this issue is the first of two pieces on the Chicago Newspaper Guild strike against Hearst; it is also part of his NM series on large newspapers. Terrall has written for numerous American publications and is a former member of the staff of *Time.*

Flashbacks

ON SEPT. 13, 1932, many of America's best known writers, including Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, and Lincoln Steffens, announced their support of the Communist Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates, William Z. Foster and James W. Ford. . . . Making aviation history, Sigismund Levanevsky and Victor Levchenko landed at Los Angeles Sept. 13, 1936, after having flown across the North Pole from Moscow. . . . One of America's potential fuhrers, Huey P. Long, was shot Sept. 8, 1936.



Samuel Sillen

Mr. Sillen, who this week writes about the drive to suppress "The Grapes of Wrath," has been literary editor of NM for two and a half years. Sillen gained his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin and taught at the university in Madison for five years. He has been a member of the English department at New York University for the past four years. With Granville Hicks he is alternating on NM weekly book commentary.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXII SEPTEMBER 12, 1939 NUMBER 12

The Meaning of This War

An analysis of the causes and implications of the European conflict. What is America's position? An editorial article.

THE war of nerves is over. The war of bullets and bombs has begun. In Poland the guns of the Nazi legions speak with blood and death. Fiery steel leaps from the skies to strike down men, women, and children. Ruin spreads like a plague. A German submarine torpedoes a British passenger ship with more than thirteen hundred people aboard. The French armies move on the western front. Twenty-one years after the war to end war, Europe is at war again. And the flames of that war rise over the entire world.

In years to come there will be no need to go back to musty archives to discover the chief incendiary. The world knows his name. This is the war that Hitler made. And now that it has come, men and women everywhere hope from the depths of their hearts that it will prove to be the war that unmade Hitler.

Our first thought, after the initial sense of horror and indignation, is, naturally, of our own safety. America must do everything to keep out. President Roosevelt expressed the overwhelming sentiment of our people when at his press conference last Friday and over the air Sunday he declared his determination to make every effort to prevent this country from being embroiled. This is all the more necessary in view of the fact that this war is a consequence of imperialist conflicts, of aggression and connivance with aggression for which our government bears no direct responsibility. But no formal neutrality or passive withdrawal can be effective in keeping America out of war. In the words of President Roosevelt:

> And it seems to me clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate, as far as it is possible to do so, the continued use of force between nations.

For America to make a real contribution to peace it is necessary to understand clearly why this conflict came, what the issues are, and how the interests of the American people can best be served.

WAS THE WAR INEVITABLE?

Hitler, the man, is the mask of German fascist imperialism. He is leading the German people to disaster. But there are accomplices in the crime. This war began, not on Sept. 1, 1939, with the invasion of Poland, but on Sept. 18, 1931, with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. From Asia it was extended to Africa in 1935 with Mussolini's conquest of Ethiopia. From Africa it leapt to Europe in 1936 with Germany's and Italy's invasion of Spain, followed by the swallowing of Austria and the partition of Czechoslovakia in 1938, and the seizure of what remained of Czechoslovakia and of Albania in 1939. These are the tragic stepping-stones to the present catastrophe. And every one has been built not only of lawless aggression on the part of fascist Germany, Italy, and Japan, but of retreat and collaboration with international banditry on the part of the British and French ruling classes, aided, directly or indirectly, by the reactionary isolationists in our own country. Chamberlain-Daladier appeasement has fed the flame of aggression until it has now burst into a general European conflagration, bringing war's agony to millions who want peace.

More specifically, the present war is the fruit of Munich and all that has happened since Munich. It is the fruit of the Munichites' crowning act of treachery, the refusal of the British and French governments, as well as the Polish government, to do that which alone could effectively protect Polish independence and probably avert a general war: the conclusion of a genuine mutual assistance pact with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The reactionary Agrarians in the Czechoslovak government last September forced the surrender to Hitler under the slogan "Rather Hitler than Stalin." The governments in London, Paris, and Warsaw apparently operated under the same slogan, though outright surrender was no longer possible. That slogan won them not peace but war.

The accomplices to the crime also had their aides and dupes. They were those Socialist leaders, like Leon Blum and Paul Faure in France, and the heads of the Labor Party in Britain, who rejected labor unity and preferred to unite with Chamberlain and Daladier in support of the Munich policy. It was Blum who fathered the fraud of non-intervention, which was the art of substituting chloroform for the bullet to assassinate loyalist Spain. Non-intervention, in turn, fathered Munich. And both the French Socialist Party and the British Labor Party bestowed their blessings on Chamberlain's and Daladier's errands to Hitler, while the French Socialist Party gave Daladier a vote of confidence for the perpetration of new Munichs. At the same time the leaders of these two parties, as well as of the Socialist Second International and the International Federation of Trade Unions, rejected the repeated proposals of the Communist International for the establishment of international working class unity to save loyalist Spain and end fascist brigandage everywhere. Similarly, in our own country the reactionary majority of the AFL Executive Council, by their divisive tactics in the labor movement and their isolationist outlook in world affairs, strengthened the hand of the tory coalition in Congress which succeeded in frustrating, in large measure, President Roosevelt's efforts to make America a constructive factor for peace.

No, the war was not inevitable, just as Munich was not inevitable. Had the British and French governments adopted the policy which the Soviet Union urged, the policy of collective resistance to aggression, Hitler would long since have been brought to a halt. Even at the eleventh hour, had Britain and France, instead of going through their elaborate mummery in Moscow, concluded a real pact of mutual assistance, the war could still possibly have been averted. Or, at any rate, it would have been fought under conditions that would have guaranteed its short duration and a victory for the anti-aggression bloc.

THE ROLE OF THE SOVIET UNION

On August 23 the Soviet Union, in pursuance of its established policy of maintaining good economic and political relations with all capitalist countries, signed a non-aggression pact with Germany. At once the press and the radio began to bellow that the USSR had formed an alliance with Germany—which is precisely the impression that Hitler wanted to create—and that the signing of the pact was the cause of the breakdown of the negotiations with Britain and France—which is the impression that the London and Paris Munichites wanted to create. On August 26 Voroshilov, Soviet defense commissar, gave an interview in which he categorically declared that the negotiations had broken down because the British and French governments, while professing a desire to conclude a mutual as-

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sistance pact, had effectively nullified the principle of mutual assistance by supporting the Polish government in its refusal to permit the Red Army to come to its aid in case of attack by Germany. That interview was suppressed or played down by nearly all the newspapers in this country. On August 31, Molotov, Soviet premier and foreign commissar, gave further details which make even clearer the culpability of Britain and France. Again suppression, distortion, burial.

No denial of these grave charges has come from London and Paris. It is reasonable to conclude that in this case silence convicts. On the other hand, from at least two American news sources there has come confirmation. Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, in their "Washington Merry-Go-Round" column of August 30, publish the story of the negotiations under the headline: "English Double-X Blocked Red Pact." And in the September 2 issue of the New York *World-Telegram,* one f the papers in the forefront of the anti-viet crusade, Major George Fielding Eliot bled from London: "They [Polish government officials] were firmly set against the e of Russian troops on Polish soil, although ey admitted the possibility of a certain nount of Russian air reenforcement." Yet iespite this and despite Molotov's unequivcal exposition of Soviet policy, the fan.astic campaign continues, with non-existent Soviet military missions to Germany being concocted by even the most respectable newspapers in an effort to "prove" an alliance. And the wonder is—or is it?—that liberal organs like the *Nation* and *New Republic* fall for this stuff.

Anti-fascists, particularly at this critical hour, should be wary of anything that tends to divide their ranks. Those liberals who have been in such haste to damn the Soviet Union for refusing to do what the United States likewise refuses to do—be the dupe of the reactionary British and French ruling classes—should not feel too comfortable to find themselves in the company of Father Coughlin and William Randolph Hearst.

MOLOTOV'S SPEECH

For a real insight into the meaning of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression pact and the events leading up to it we recommend a careful reading of Molotov's speech, the full text of which appeared in last Saturday's *Daily Worker,* as well as of Stalin's report to the Eighteenth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party last March. Molotov made clear that two developments led up to the pact: the breakdown in negotiations with Britain and France, and a reversal in Germany's attitude toward the USSR. No one has any illusions, of course, that this change in the Nazi government's attitude is anything but the product of necessity. But to have refused to take advantage of this in order to neutralize the Nazi menace to the Soviet Union and to scotch the Chamberlain-Daladier game of isolating the USSR and entangling it with Germany would have been, to put it mildly, foolhardy in the extreme. The gain, however, has been not only for the Soviet Union, whose interests coincide with the interests of the peoples of all nations. As we pointed out last week, other countries, including the United States, have benefited from the non-aggression pact: Japan has been isolated, a new Munich prevented, and Hitler, launching a war on two fronts, is compelled to stand without allies against two such formidable opponents as Britain and France.

Those who attack the pact can hardly be said to be serving American interests. For the United States the shattering of the anti-Comintern alliance has meant a decided gain both in the Far East and in Latin America. Molotov's statement that "the USSR is not obliged to involve itself in war either on the side of Great Britain against Germany or on the side of Germany against Great Britain" is in tune with majority sentiment in our own country regarding American foreign policy. Americans have no wish to play the imperialist game of either the destroyers or the doublecrossers of Czechoslovakia.

WHAT COURSE SHOULD AMERICA FOLLOW?

"When peace has been broken anywhere," said President Roosevelt in his radio address last Sunday, "the peace of all countries everywhere is in danger." This is an elementary truth. And from it flows the corollary that the surest way to protect America's peace is to help restore peace in Europe. Not any kind of peace, not a new Munich or a new Versailles, but, in the words of the President, "the kind of peace in other lands which will not jeopardize peace at home." No specious isolationism offers a refuge from Europe's carnage. The President's determination to keep America out of war assumes reality only because he has at the same time pledged "the continuation of efforts to restore peace." In this all reliable polls show he has the support of the majority of the people.

Poland's peril—greatly aggravated by the British, French, and Polish governments' rejection of a Soviet pact—is the source of America's peril. A swift, decisive victory over German fascism is America's best guarantee that it will keep out of war. It is too early to outline every step that our government should take. But not only our sympathy must go to the Polish people, but our economic assistance as well. And our economic aid must likewise go to all who help defend Polish national independence. Apart from other considerations, self-interest dictates nothing less.

Can the Chamberlain and Daladier governments be trusted to give Poland effective support? Can they be trusted not to direct this war toward a new Munich at the expense of Poland or other countries? Can they be trusted to confine the conflict to democratic objectives, not to convert it into a war for imperialist conquest and the imposition on the German people of a new Versailles? Their record up until the very eve of hostilities offers no assurance that they can. There must be no collaboration between our government and the governments of Chamberlain and Daladier for imperialist purposes. There must be every collaboration with the peace-loving peoples of Britain, France, Poland, and other countries. And there can be no more fruitful collaboration for peace than between the two great powers which were not involved in the Munich betrayal and in the appeasement policies that led to the present war, the United States and the Soviet Union. Together these two countries could exercise a decisive influence in assuring a defeat for German fascism and a just democratic peace.

In his broadcast Mr. Roosevelt made an appeal for national unity and an end to partisan politics. It would be too much to expect the party of Hamilton Fish, who has been running around Europe defending Hitler and urging capitulation to him, to give more than lip service to this proposal. It would be too much to expect the confreres of Senator Burke of Nebraska, the right-wing Democrat who, two days after the Munich pact, returned from Europe drooling praise of the Hitler regime, to be more solicitous of the nation's welfare than they have been in the past. It is from the common folk that unity must come. And they must speak with a voice that will penetrate even into the halls of Congress.

In his message at the opening of Congress last January the President said: "Our nation's program of economic and social reform is therefore a part of defense as basic as armaments themselves." There can be no retreat from the New Deal social program without retreating from national security. On the contrary, there must be advance and along lines even more far-reaching than the New Deal strategists at present envisage. Nationalization of the railroads, the munitions industry, and the Morgan-Rockefeller-Kuhn-Loeb banking monopoly, and a five billion dollar federal housing plan should form the foundations of a comprehensive program of social and national defense. Around such a program the constructive forces of the nation can rally. Under its banner they can march to a New Deal victory in 1940. In this hour of peril to America's peace, when totalitarian tyranny threatens everything we hold dear, that victory is all the more essential if democracy in the United States is to continue to breathe and grow. The war is a challenge to our national wisdom, our national will for peace. Let us take up the challenge and point the way.

Pact Comparison

THE commercial agreement between the Soviet Union and Germany stipulates that: The Soviet Union shall purchase $80,000,000 worth of German goods over a period of two years. Germany shall purchase $72,000,000 worth of Soviet goods over a period of two years.

The office of the secretary of R. H. Macy & Co. advises NEW MASSES that the annual business of their New York department store alone is over $82,000,000.

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War Bulletin

Arms and the Men: Poland and the Western Front: A Military Expert Analyzes Battle Lines in Europe

A COMPARISON of the strength of the combatants in the European arena must include manpower, preparedness in material, morale, strategic position and line. The manpower of the British, French, Polish forces roughly approximates that of the Germans: about six million men in the field on each side with a slight advantage for the Allies. Undoubtedly the Germans are better prepared from the point of material. Their whole program has been centered on the development of their army. The advantage of morale among the population must lie with the Allies. Hitler's conquered nationalities at this time portend a grave danger for German inner unity. But even this factor will not be of decisive importance unless the Nazis suffer military defeats.

Hints that are emanating from British and French quarters regarding internal dissension in Germany should be cautiously accepted. The revolutionary forces within Germany will be active. But no one should be prematurely persuaded of immediate disintegration.

On the other hand, the vacillating tactics of Chamberlain and Daladier must have confused many workers in France and Britain. This would tend to weaken morale in both these countries. Popular confidence in government leadership has had to be bolstered by the inclusion of new members in the cabinets. The Poles are fighting for national independence. Although their large army is among the weakest, materially and technically, in Europe, they will undoubtedly give a good account of themselves.

Strategically Germany is blockaded by sea. Except for some of her ocean-going submarines, the bulk of her small naval forces are doomed to lie in their ports, targets for the Allies' aviation. On land, however, the situation is advantageous for Germany. The Limes Line is probably as strong as the Maginot Line in France. Even in a normal position military commanders estimate that the attacker requires a three-to-one preponderance of forces. On the Limes Line the British and French will in all probability require a considerable preponderance of forces. Hitler has without doubt about a million in the Limes front. Flanking attacks may be partially successful and partial infiltration may be made but the Limes defenses are organized to thirty miles in depth and can hold out for an indefinite period.

The time element here is of vital importance for Poland. Unless considerable German forces can be drawn to the west, Poland is doomed. The Allies' strategy should at once base itself upon this necessity. Hitler has met with considerable resistance. But his rate of advance has been rapid nevertheless. Barring certain episodes (for example, d'Esperey's advance in the Balkans during the First World War, the advance of the Red Army on Warsaw in 1920) it would appear that the Nazi forces have reached their objective on schedule. Should Hitler's forces occupy Poland within a few months he will undoubtedly be ready to discuss the terms of peace with the Allies. He will already have obtained what he wants. Italy's de facto neutrality should be suspect at this time. Huge supplies cannot reach Germany from anywhere but Italy, Hungary, and Rumania. From the Soviet Union Germany can receive only a very insignificant amount of supplies under the new trade agreement [See page 13] while Poland, on the other hand, is in a position to use the USSR as its chief external source of raw and war materials. Voroshilov indicated clearly that the Soviets are quite willing to sell to the Poles.

Air bombardment without correlation with ground troops cannot win a war. Germany knows this, hence she has concentrated her air attack upon Poland in conjunction with her troop movements. Britain and France may seriously disturb the German people by air attacks, but they will not defeat Hitler that way. And as long as Italy, Hungary, and Rumania sell him materials which they themselves can import, possibilities of starving him out are lessened. His strategic position is strong although it contains within itself the seed of ultimate defeat. In the meanwhile a few German long-range submarines can make British shipping uncomfortable. Submarine bases no doubt already exist along the Spanish coast, the Canary Islands, Rio del Oro, and in South America.

In one respect Hitler's tactics for the whole phase of the war are questionable and are probably responsible for the fact that his motorized divisions have not made more rapid progress. The advance of the German army was too widely dispersed in its initial phases. In other words, Hitler's General Staff disregarded the *Blitzkrieg* for the much more conservative plan of feeling out the weak spots on a wide front. Had Hitler centered very powerful columns on three points—for example, Pomerania, Upper Silesia, and Slovakia—and driven forward on concentric lines toward Lodz, his progress would have been much more rapid. In all probability he would have cut off and surrounded large bodies of the Polish army which could hardly have outdistanced his motorized columns. The main objective of the East Prussian drive with aid from Pomerania could have been the Corridor. This failure may cost him dearly in the time factor. It will undoubtedly cost him a great deal more in material and casualties.

MAJOR ALLEN JOHNSON.

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Seven Fateful Days

THE alarums and excitements of an approaching war, bringing their torrents of unconfirmed reports, wild rumors, unofficial statements, interviews with persons "close to governmental circles," is astounding even to one accustomed to the barrages of today's commercial press and radio. Aggravated by the European censorships, which permit little factual reporting to get through, the journalists who must cater to a bewildered world through unprincipled newspapers, who will not take truth for an answer, are forced to write mostly out of thin air.

We have assembled the simple facts given below from the past week's newspapers. They are stories which were later confirmed as true or whose significance was enhanced by subsequent events. The editor assembling them was amazed at how small a collection of permanent news could be found (news that was not almost immediately denied in the very press that first printed it). We present this simple chronology as a quick retrospect over the days of tumult just before and just after the declarations of war.

Wednesday, August 30

PRIME MINISTER CHAMBERLAIN of England stated that he was still striving for an "understanding" with Herr Hitler concerning the much mooted question of the independence of the Free City of Danzig. . . . The German government was demanding a revision of the Polish Corridor and the annexation of Danzig. . . . With threats of European war in the air, the authority of the Panama Canal placed military guards on all ships passing through the isthmus. . . . In New York the customs officers of the port made a thorough search of the *S. S. Bremen* for "implements of war." . . . The Supreme Soviet of the USSR met in Moscow to consider a new agricultural tax law, a bill on universal military service, and ratification of the non-aggression pact between the USSR and Germany. . . . As food tickets were distributed to the German people, the German Chancellery reported that Herr Hitler had stricken soup and dessert from his private menu, for the time being. . . . Five million Americans of Polish descent rallied in mass meetings in the United States to pledge all aid to the menaced country. . . . The Federation of Polish Jews in America offered their assistance to Poland through the Polish ambassador. . . . Japanese newspapers announced their new premier with the nickname "the warless general" and described his Cabinet, formed as a result of the setback of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, as "stale and lacking in freshness."

Thursday, August 31

GERMANY'S Communist newspaper, *Rote Fahne,* distributed throughout the country secretly, today called for all German anti-fascists to demonstrate for peace. It asked that whispered voices spread the news that Hitler's hysterical demand for Danzig was but a screen for his planned attack upon Poland. . . . Prime Minister Chamberlain sent a secret note to Herr Hitler after the latter had requested that Britain instruct Poland to send an emissary to Berlin to turn over Danzig and the Polish Corridor to him. . . . All telegraphic and telephonic communication between the European continent and the United States, except calls to banks, was suspended. . . . The British established a censorship over all press dispatches. . . . The English mobilized their army and navy. . . . The Poles raised an army of 2,500,000 men. . . . The French completed mobilization and announced that German soldiers, mostly Prussians and Austrians, were already deserting over the Rhine.

Friday, September 1

HITLER declared that the German nation had been attacked by the Poles and immediately blockaded the Polish port of Gdynia. . . . Danzig was seized by its Nazis and incorporated in the Reich. . . . The German aircraft commenced bombardment of Polish towns. . . . The English evacuated three million children from London and other cities. . . . The London Stock Exchange closed down. . . . Hitler claimed that Chamberlain had given him a formal assurance that the Polish negotiator he requested yesterday would come to Berlin to deliver Poland as requested. . . . 400,000 German soldiers massed on the borders of Poland. . . . Jesse Jones, United States lending administrator, asserted that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and the U. S. Export-Import Bank were prepared to finance the export of surplus American commodities to European nations.

Saturday, September 2

HITLER announced the invasion of the Polish nation without formal declaration of war. . . . Warsaw, the Polish capital, was raided by German bombers. . . . The Polish government asked assistance from England and France. . . . President Roosevelt announced his government's intention of keeping America out of the European war. . . . Chamberlain postponed his statement on the war and England's intentions. . . . Premier Daladier said, "France even at this late date is ready to try for conciliation if the fighting stops. . . . Italy announced its temporary neutrality. . . . France mobilized eight million men as Warsaw was bombed four times in one day.

Sunday, September 3

GREAT BRITAIN declared war upon Germany. . . . France declared war upon Germany. . . . Italy, after a last minute suggestion of a peace conference excluding the Soviet Union, reduced her war preparations. . . . The Cunard-White Star liner *Athenia* was torpedoed and sunk off the Irish coast, many being killed or drowned. . . . The value of 300,000,000 bushels of surplus American wheat increased $12,000,000 in the last twenty-four hours. . . . A squadron of Polish aircraft attempted to bomb Berlin, but were driven off at Frankfort-on-Oder. . . . The German theory of "lightning war" disappeared today as war preparations were underway in England and France with the German army occupied in moving through western Poland. . . . Hitler left Berlin leisurely to join the German army in Poland. . . . The English fleet took up blockade positions in the North Sea and the Mediterranean. . . . President Roosevelt addressed the nation by radio, saying in part: "This nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American citizen remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts. Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience."

Monday, September 4

BERLIN announced that the German army would refrain from using poison gas as the Polish government complained that the civilian population was suffering from the Germans' use of gas in their raids. . . . Italy announced that the Italian Line would resume regular sailings in a few days. . . . The German freighter *Olinda* was sunk in the south Atlantic Ocean by the British Cruiser *Ajax*. . . . "Operations have begun by combined land, sea, and air forces," says Communique No. 1 of the French War Office. . . . $1,200,000 had been collected by Polish-American societies to aid their homeland. . . . Bombs fell upon the Danish town of Esbjerg, killing at least two civilians. . . . Residents of Berlin showed no resentment toward Britain or France, foreign observers report. . . . J. P. Morgan, returning from England, said, "It would be a natural thing, if the British government wanted an American agent, that they would call upon us to repeat our performances." . . . Because of forced provisioning of the German Army, Slovakia faces a famine if the war lasts two months more. . . . British aircraft raided the German naval base of Wilhelmshaven.

Tuesday, September 5

THE German military forces claimed to be nearing Warsaw as the Polish government prepared to evacuate its officials. . . . President Roosevelt issued a proclamation of embargo on all American shipments of arms, munitions, airplanes, and implements of war to the belligerents. . . . Rumanian authorities threatened to fine movie audiences who booed Nazis leaders in newsreels. . . . British planes flew over Hamburg. . . . French war communiques reported engagements with the Germans on the western front, but no details were given. . . . Maurice Thorez, general secretary of the Communist Party of France, presented himself for military service with the French Army. . . . Walter Lippmann, New York *Herald Tribune* columnist, wrote: "Mr. Roosevelt's personal declarations will not be regarded as authoritative in the outer world." . . . Swiss dispatches reported serious disorders in Germany. . . . Canada was exempted from the United States neutrality regulations applying to Germany, Poland, France, the United Kingdom, India, Australia, and New Zealand.

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The Future of Chamberlain

England must decide whether it will fight a long, exhausting imperialist war under Chamberlain or a short, anti-fascist war under a representative government.

London (By cable—passed by British censorship).

THIS war, unlike that of 1914-18, has run an uneven course. In its first phase, the phase of aggression beginning with Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931, the aggressors met a minimum resistance. Britain and France, with most to lose, fought least. Resistance has only now begun. The future will tell how much, how well perhaps, still later anti-fascist forces will shake off all traitors and defeatists in high places for the real and full offensive against the criminal aggression of Rome, Berlin, and Tokyo. Full accounting with the enemy inside is an absolute precondition to victory over the enemy abroad. Yesterday the problem was how to organize resistance; today the problem is how to win the war. Those who thought resistance would never come were just as wrong as those who now think that the decisive step has already been taken.

The war of steel will test the nerves, especially the political nerves, in a way that the war of nerves never tested steel.

CAN THEY BE TRUSTED?

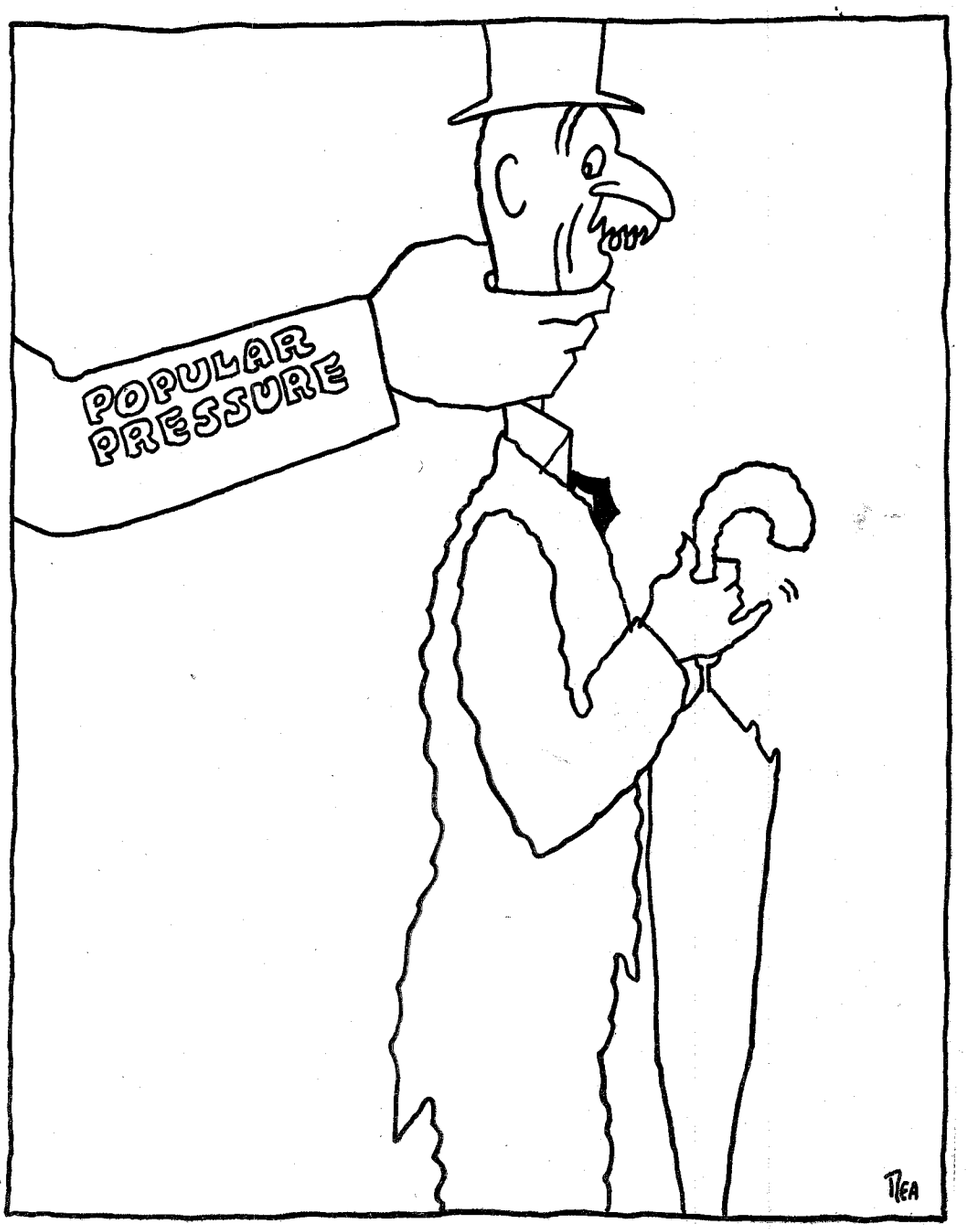
The immediate life-and-death question is what kind of government can win the war most quickly. To support the war is one thing, to support the government another. Can they be trusted to win a war who almost lost it without fighting? who surrended thirty-five Czechoslovakian divisions only a year ago? who forced France to pull thousands of men from the German front to guard the Spanish frontier? who encouraged Poland to reject direct Soviet aid? Moreover, the character of the government may determine the final character of the war itself. If they continue to persecute French Communists, to repulse Soviet collaboration, if they attempt to compromise Polish independence, the imperialist character of the war will harden. In that case no friend of freedom will care which side wins the last battle as long as both imperialisms are mortally wounded in the process.

In the past week there has been a sober rethinking about these basic questions in all groups. The Chamberlain group has found it necessary to bring Churchill and Eden into a somewhat makeshift, probably transition war Cabinet.

Only a month ago Chamberlain hotly scored Churchill on the ground that the latter "very often finds himself in agreement" with the opposition. At the time Churchill shook his head in sorrow, to use his own words, at Chamberlain's vain effort to adjourn Parliament two months ago as Nazi aggression against Poland approached its climax. It is evident that the very existence of a state of war has weakened Chamberlain's position more than anything else. The reorganized Cabinet is an improvement, but it is no more than a beginning towards a real war Cabinet composed of men who can be trusted by the people to wage an anti-fascist, not an imperialist, war.

ON SECOND THOUGHT

The tories also seem to be thinking over the Soviet-German pact. Their first reaction was a compound of fear, anger, and relief. They were angry because the Soviets would not play their allotted role. They feared that a completely independent Soviet policy would limit their ability to maneuver with Hitler. And some are also relieved now that they will not have to fight with the Bolsheviks. One of the most influential Chamberlain tories, Sir Henry Page Croft, a member of Parliament for twenty-nine consecutive years, indiscreetly made a speech expressing the tory relief. As it was reported in the Manchester *Guardian:* "Sir Henry said that a great weight had been lifted from his mind, for he had contemplated with positive dread that we might have to draw the sword" with terrible Reds. During the past week, however, the tory press has been curiously mild toward the Soviets. It seems that they have reason to believe that Britain can get Soviet aid if she really wants it and they do not feel safe enough at this point to close the door on that possibility. There is also reason to believe



Gardner Rea

"His Majesty's government stands firm."

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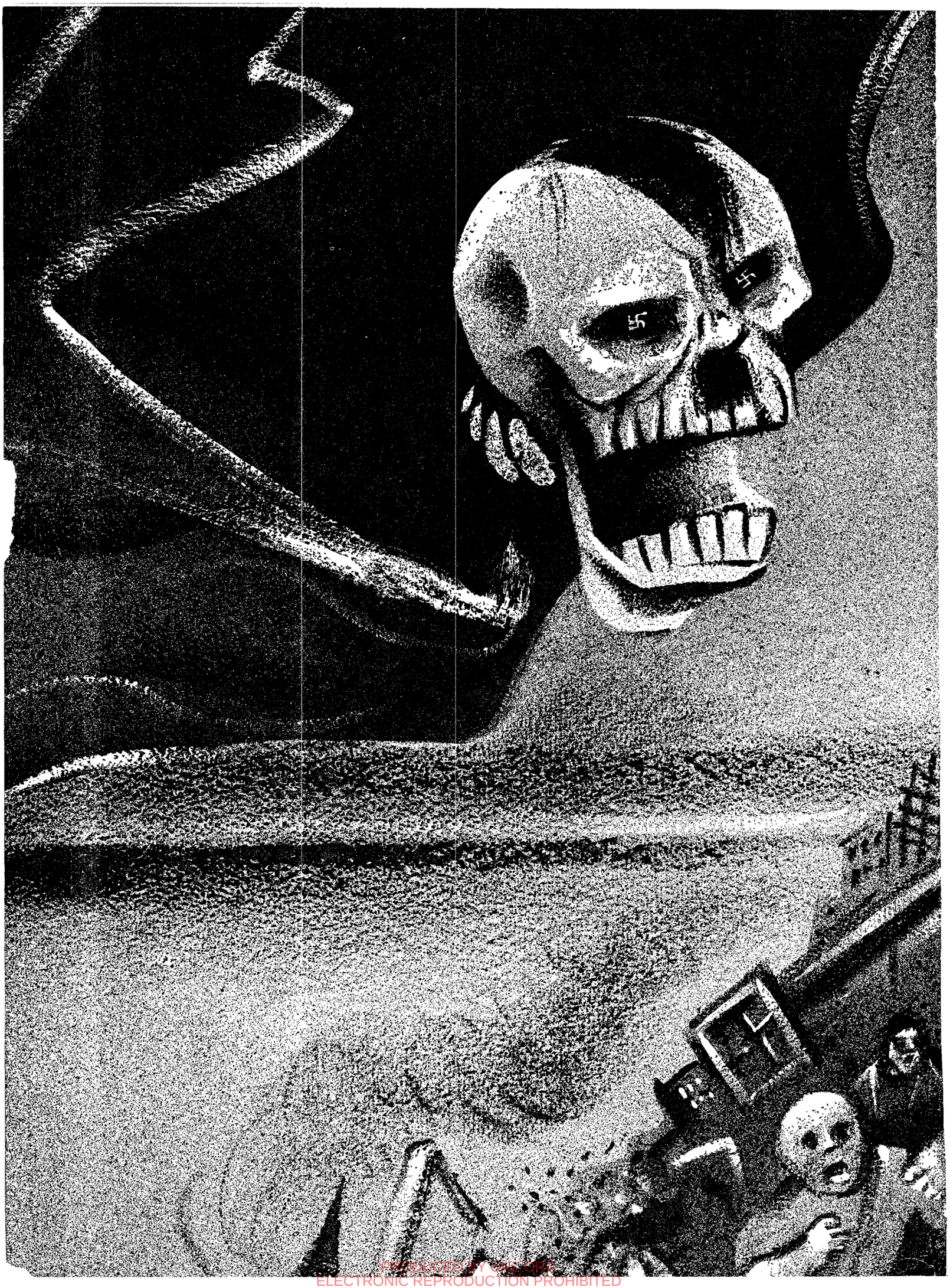

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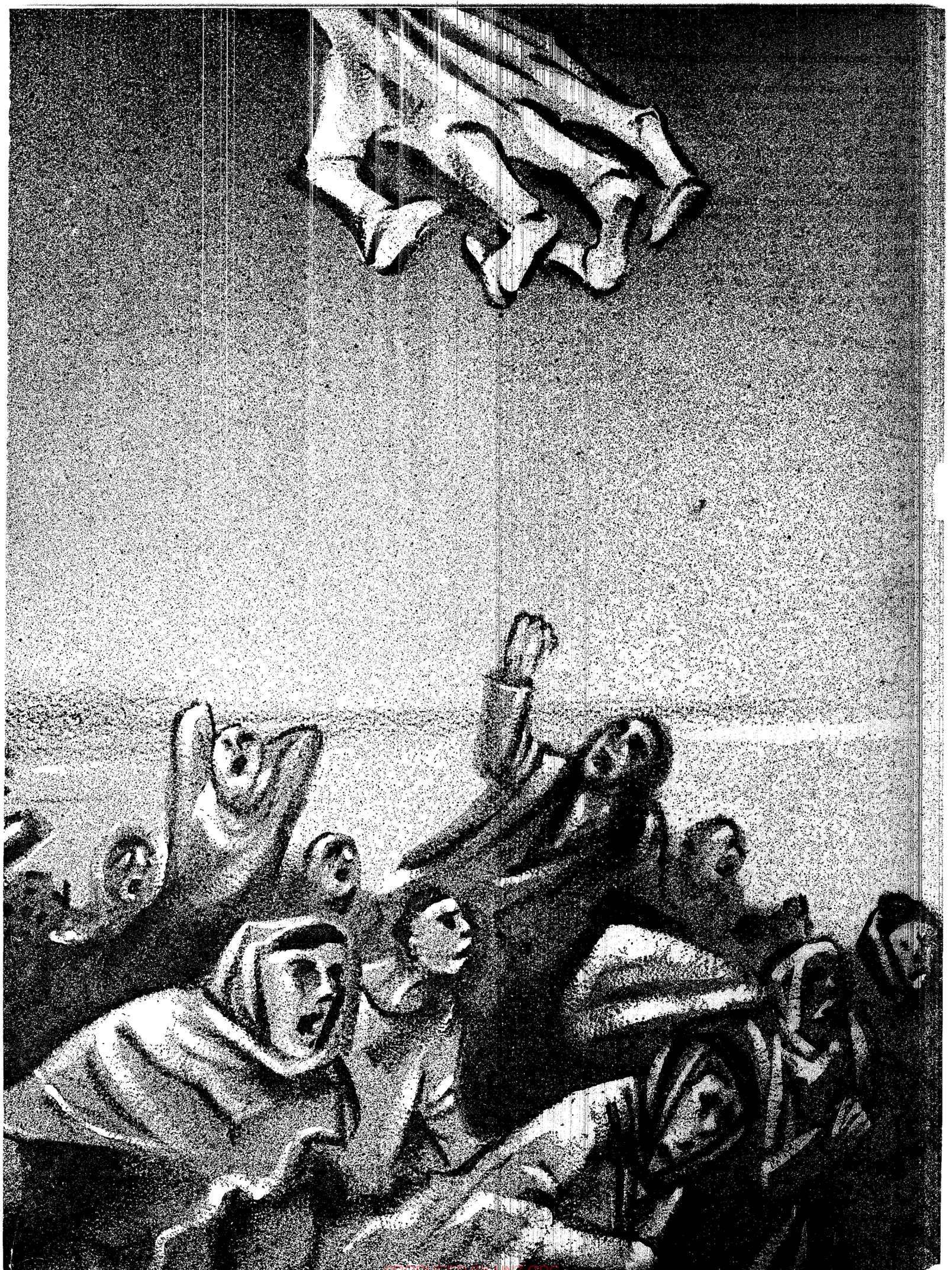

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that this policy is based on reliable knowledge that the Soviet-German pact does not mean more than it says. Another significant indication of the same thing is the reception given the speech of Willie Gallacher, Communist, in Commons yesterday. For the first time this week there were almost no tory interruptions. The reason for this sudden tolerance was that Gallacher not only declared for "speedy and effective defeat of the Nazi regime" but significantly added, "with the utmost confidence from experience and from knowledge that I will not come into conflict with the policy of my working class comrades of the Soviet Union."

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

As usual it is possible to learn much more about essential class realities from the tories than from the wriggling liberal intellectuals, unhappy in both worlds. The Liberal and Labor parties have also done some rethinking although they abdicated during the momentous debate of the twenty-fourth, excepting my favorite MP, Ellen Wilkinson, as well as Aneuran Bevan. Their refusal to enter the new Cabinet reflects a spirit of increased independence. Arthur Greenwood, acting leader of the Labor Party, has been forced to say of the government that "should there be confused councils, inefficiency, and wavering, then other men must be called to take their places." Sir Archibald Sinclair, leader of the Liberals, expressed "determination to see this thing through." It was a sad day for the prime minister, because everything he stood for had crashed in ruins, as he put it, but he got little consolation for this from the opposition, which is unlikely to enter any Cabinet he heads.

Both the Liberal and Labor press are more temperate toward the Soviet Union, though for another reason. I personally heard a hundred times if once during the last few days, from the greatest variety of people: "We were too slow. We could have had a pact with the Soviets if we had really wanted it. The Germans knew how much it meant, so they were willing to give everything but Hitler's mustache to beat us." The Labor politicians have felt the keen edge of this mass feeling and words are cheap enough to help pacify the masses upon whom their jobs depend. This is but the beginning of a doubtful direction in politics.

It is dangerous to stop until all the essential points are covered. As in every anti-fascist war the political and military sides are linked. It is not too early to consider certain strategic problems. For years leading British and French military writers advocated a purely defensive strategy. The Liddell Hart school, especially influential in recent years, is the most extreme of the defensive advocates. It has been hammered into people's heads that this will be a war of exhaustion in which those who can take the least punishment, rather than hand out the most, will win. Now if France and Britain put this strategy into practice, as seems likely, their aid to Poland will be minimum, to the great relief of the German General Staff. Two results of such strategy may immediately be foreseen. In the first place, Soviet aid will become more rather than less vital. The Soviet position after Voroshilov's statement is clear enough. Poland, supported by France and Britain, rejected the aid of Red Army detachments fighting on Polish soil. But as regards raw materials for war, Voroshilov more than intimated that this could or would follow existing trade treaties. After Voroshilov's statement I eagerly awaited British reaction for possible denials or modifications. Absolutely none appeared in any form, testifying to its entire validity.

Second, since only minimum aid can be given Poland if Britain and France take up purely or predominantly defensive positions, there arises the possibility of deep German inroads into Poland, if not actual occupation. How long Poland can hold out is a debatable question, not directly relevant to my present point, assuming substantial weakening or breakdown of the Polish position at some future time. There then would be the grave possibility that some French and British circles would urge reconsideration of the entire situation on the ground that the original cause of the conflict no longer existed.

Hitler seems to be preparing the ground for something of the sort by keeping Mussolini out of the war. The best opinion here is that Italy will stay neutral as long as possible. Moreover, Hitler seems carefully to be ringing Germany with neutral states to leave the smallest possible western front. He seems, in fact, to be trying to get a localized war, although appearances point to a general war. The neutrality of Italy is not only calculated to cover the weakest point, Germany's rear, to blackmail Western powers with Italy's possible reversal, but also to make Italy the broker in a strange new Munich-like restoration at the first favorable opportunity. This was already attempted last Friday with the five power conference proposal. Both Chamberlain and Daladier significantly applauded Mussolini's efforts. What happened once may happen again under more intricate conditions.

ANTI-FASCIST VS. IMPERIALIST

Plainly, all of these considerations go to show that the character of this war is not fully determined by the mere declaration of war. The Soviets' independent policy expressed their determination to stay out of any purely imperialist war. As for the Communist movement in Britain, the position is that Chamberlain cannot wage an anti-fascist war. These are opposite sides of the same coin. If the Western powers really mean to win this war, to win quickly, the surest guarantee would be a reversal of the attitude reflected in the pitiful negotiations with Moscow. A real anti-fascist war is the only possible short war, but for this men are needed who want to win, men who can be trusted to crush fascism.

It is for the French and British people to decide. It cannot be said that the decision has yet been made, although the very dynamics of war may hasten matters. It is one thing to fight Hitler's system, another to preserve Chamberlain's. Those who seek to do the latter will never succeed at the former. The appeasement ring was forced to retreat, but it is still capable of reincarnation. The policy of the Soviets indicates that they are taking no chances at all. The chances, indeed, are on the other side. If this war will be fought with imperialist lines on both sides it may be the last war the imperialist system will ever be able to fight. Meanwhile the Communist policy is to give all possible support to the anti-fascist character of the war by not forgetting the front at home as well as the fronts on the Rhine and Vistula.

THEODORE DRAPER.

Why Hitler Signed

JULES SAUERWEIN, foreign editor of *Paris-Soir* and one of the French journalists not openly taking Nazi gratuities, is quoted as follows in the New York *Times* for August 26:

The German-Russian pact has not had the devastating effects that Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop anticipated, and it is believed Germany, before launching catastrophe, feels the need of taking stock of the international situation.

On August 21 when Chancellor Hitler ordered Herr von Ribbentrop to go to Moscow to sign the pact, Germany's situation was one of complete isolation. Italy had reserved decision. Count Ciano, Italian foreign minister, had announced another visit for the following day, and the Germans knew in advance that he was going to bring the painful news of Italy's abstention. In this Italy was within her rights, for the Italo-German steel pact contained a secret clause that Germany should make no war before three years. Hungary was making Italy's attitude an excuse for her escape. Germany's enterprise had thus become dangerous.

It was absolutely necessary for the Reich to play a trump card. This she sought to find in a pact with Russia, with whom she had been discussing since January renewal of the pact of 1926.

Liberal Britain on the Pact

"THE German-Russian agreement . . . is the direct result of Britain's failure to form the full Anglo-Soviet alliance when it was honestly offered to us. We search our minds through the history of diplomacy, but find no parallel to the monumental folly of the rejection of the Russian offer of a conference at Bucharest after the seizure of Praha, followed by the unconditional guarantee to Poland without a prior Russian alliance."—*The "New Statesman and Nation," August 26.*

Congratulations

WE WISH to felicitate the *Nation* on having released Oswald Garrison Villard to the New York *Post,* where he has become Downing Street's war correspondent.

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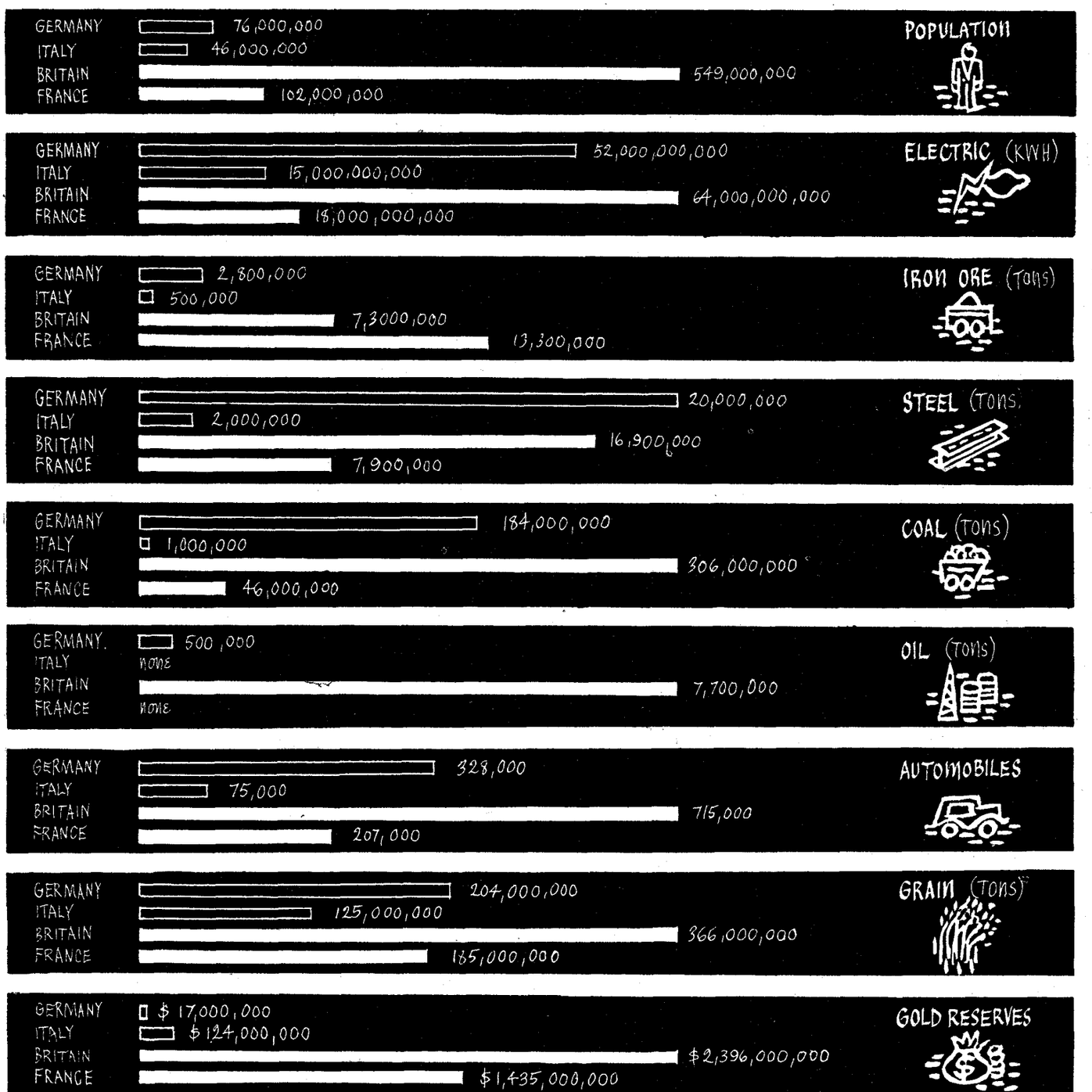

Darryl Frederick

The Sinews of War

LIKE a handicapping table, these figures on the population and resources of the leaders of the opposing axis powers give a glimpse of what the future may hold in war. Negligible Italy aside, the key resources of those countries opposing Germany should be overwhelming in the hands of a true anti-fascist government. The sincerity of the Chamberlain and Daladier governments in the interests of their people will soon be tested in their use of these resources.

It will be interesting to see what proportion of these resources will be sold to the enemy through the intermediation of "sympathetic" quasi-neutral countries.

The figures given are chiefly those of the year 1937. The results of the annexation of the Sudetenland and Austria are included in the German figures. The grain crops include wheat, rice, oats, barley, and corn. All figures include the colonial output of the countries.

The gigantic war apparatus created by the fascist States is based on an extremely weak and uncertain economic foundation. The Achilles' heel of the aggressor nations is the lack of raw materials necessary for war.

Not one of the aggressor countries has its own mineral oil, rubber, cotton, wool, tin, nickel, manganese, and the majority of the non-ferrous metals. Not one of them has sufficient iron. In the chart, iron ore and steel production are plotted on the same scale. Note how dependent on imports the fascist states are in regard to this raw material.

Between the gigantic and inflated war apparatus of the aggressors and their economic and financial war reserves there is an enormous discrepancy. In Germany *67 percent of the total budget* is expended for military purposes; in Italy, 52 percent.

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Where the Communists Stand

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT has cautioned the American people to discriminate most carefully between news and rumor. "Do not believe of necessity everything you hear or read," the President advised in his radio address last Sunday evening. "Check up on it first."

We are faced with two kinds of news censorship. One is imposed by the belligerent powers. The other is imposed by the American commercial press, which is openly violating its obligation—and its pretense—to tell the truth, "to discriminate between actual verified fact on the one hand, and mere rumor on the other."

The attitude of the various Communist parties has been totally misrepresented in the capitalist press. We are therefore reprinting, word for word, the statements which actually define this attitude.

Great Britain

ON September 1, the Central Committee of the British Communist Party issued a fourteen-point manifesto on the war crisis. This manifesto was passed by the British cable censor. It was scrapped by the self-appointed censors of the American press. The program of the British Communist Party demands:

"1. Britain must have no secret aims, imperialist designs, or understanding with the fascist forces; she must help the peoples establish democratic governments in the fascist countries involved in the war; she must restore democratic independence to Austria and Czechoslovakia; peace must be based on no indemnities and no annexations.

"2. An immediate conference of all democratic powers, including the Soviet Union and the United States, to obtain the fullest cooperation in the war against fascism.

"3. Freedom of speech, press, and organization for all who are for the defeat of fascism.

"4. Extension of full democratic rights to the colonial peoples.

"5. Introduction of democracy into the armed forces.

"6. Immediate mobilization of labor for construction of deep, bomb-proof shelters for the people and democratic control of the civilian defense organizations.

"7. Nationalization of the arms industry and fullest guarantees to the trade unions as regards essential customs and practices in peacetime; given this, there is nothing the workers will not do to provide maximum arms production.

"8. Control of capital and the export of capital and the commodity markets.

"9. Adequate allowances and pensions for all wounded and disabled.

"10. Taking over of the land of the idle rich for the development of agriculture.

"11. The closing down of luxury establishments and country residences for the use of the wounded and as evacuation and rest homes.

"12. Suppression of all fascist and semi-fascist bodies and dismissal from the government service of persons holding such opinions.

"13. A program of social advance for Britain and elimination of profiteering and the stranglehold of the trusts.

"14. Strict control of food prices and profits."

France

THE unwarranted suppression of *Humanite,* organ of the French Communist Party, has made it difficult for the French CP to make its position known to the entire people. But in the face of obvious difficulties, the party has declared and broadcast its appeal for unity against fascist aggression. Maurice Thorez, general secretary of the party, has presented himself for mobilization in accordance with the mobilization order. Deputy Henri de Kerillis, director of *Epoque* and spokesman for the French General Staff, has announced his conviction that French Communists will do their duty in defense of their country. Even before the outbreak of the war, Marcel Cachin, veteran Communist senator, wrote a letter on the position of his party, a portion of which was reproduced in Leon Blum's newspaper, *Populaire.* The selection follows:

"At this grave hour, the Communist Party affirms that if Hitler declares war on France, he will be faced by a united French nation with the Communists in the front ranks in defense of the security of the country. We declare our approval of the measures of the government taken to safeguard the frontiers and bring aid, if necessary, to a nation which may be attacked and to whom we are bound by a treaty of alliance.

"Finally, we proclaim the necessity of the unity of all Frenchmen to make the fascist warmongers retreat. Nothing will make the hundreds of thousands of French workers staying at our side abandon this position. They will not make a single gesture against that unity of France so indispensable for the defense of our country."

Germany

THE Communist Party of Germany has continued to function since 1933 despite the ever present threat of concentration camps and executions. The following plan of action is from the illegal paper *Rote Fahne* issued just before Hitler marched on Poland:

"1. Communists, Socialists, and all anti-fascists must agree among themselves to distribute joint whisper-campaign slogans, wall slogans, to spread leaflets in telephone and address books. The Nazis' chauvinist incitement over Danzig must be constantly exposed as the cover for Hitler aggression against Poland. To counter Nazi lies, the truth about the firm, clear peace policy of the Soviet Union must be made known.

"2. Together in the factories, mass organizations, on the streets, in the villages and everywhere, everything possible must be done to hamper Hitler's war preparations. Fight against exploitation, for the eight hour day and higher wages! Support the women in their protest against foodstuff difficulties for which only Hitler's war policy is responsible! Butter, lard, meat, instead of guns!

"3. Remember the lessons of September 1938. A similar situation of tense war danger can suddenly occur again. Storm your factory councils with inquiries, leave your workshops, leave the mines in mass groups, and demand explanations in factory meetings. Think what a tremendous effect on the whole peace-desiring population a strike can have in such a tense situation.

"4. Organize mass meetings at stations, fraternize on the streets with the marching troops whom Hitler is sending to their death. When the anti-war mood in the factories or streets is favorable, develop short peace meetings with the call: 'We want peace! Down with Hitler!' Realize that often the brave conduct of a few individuals will act as a lever on the others.

"5. Bold initiative in the development of party organizations, individual contacts, groups, leaders, in encouraging and training new leaders. Our policy can only be carried out if we have organizations really capable of becoming the flesh and blood of the masses."

The United States

THE following slogans were presented by Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party of the USA, in his closing report to the National Committee of the party on September 3. They were unanimously adopted by the National Committee, which met at Chicago last weekend:

"For American national and social security.

"Full moral, diplomatic, and economic help for the Polish people and those who help Poland defend its national independence.

"Embargo Japan and Germany for the defeat of fascist aggression and for establishing a democratic peace.

"All possible credits and material aid to China.

"All help to the democratic forces in Spain and full aid to the Spanish refugees.

"Help the German people establish a democratic Germany. For the freedom and national independence of Czechoslovakia and Austria.

"United States and Latin American initiative, in collaboration with the Soviet Union, for a world peace conference.

"Defeat the plotters of a new Munich and their Trotskyist and Lovestoneite agents.

"Support the peace policy of the Soviet Union.

"Strengthen the good neighbor policy as a bulwark of democracy and peace in the Americas.

"Unite the American people around the New Deal and its progressive policies.

"Nationalize the munitions industry.

"Replace the monopolists on the War Industries Board with representatives of the people.

"Guarantee the rights of unionization, collective bargaining, and trade union standards in all industries.

"For jobs, security, democracy, and peace."

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What's on Your Mind?

More answers to questions from our readers on the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact and on the USSR-German trade agreement.

LAST week NEW MASSES, in its editorial article explaining why the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was signed, gave answers to a number of questions that have been asked concerning the pact. This week we answer additional questions concerning the pact and the new war situation. We invite our readers to send us more.

Q. Now that Germany has attacked Poland, will the Soviet Union provide the Nazi government with agricultural products and other materials as provided in the new trade agreement?

It would be foolhardy to attempt to predict the exact course of Soviet policy, which is always determined by the interests of the Soviet people and the peoples of other nations. But the record of the Soviet Union in the case of other acts of aggression is clear. It is the only country that has given substantial assistance to the Spanish and Chinese people in their struggle against fascist invasion. Evidence that the non-aggression pact has not altered this policy is contained in the statement made about ten days after the signing of the pact by Alexander Semionovitch Reanaouchkine, new Soviet ambassador to China, extending in behalf of his government "hearty wishes for the complete victory of the Chinese nation in its struggle for national independence." He declared, according to the New York *Times* of September 2, that "the recent conclusion of a commercial treaty between the two nations would contribute to still closer and more fruitful cooperation."

In regard to Poland, Voroshilov, Soviet defense commissar, in his statement on August 26 declared: "Assistance in raw and war materials is a question of trade, and conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance, not to speak of a military convention, is by no means necessary in order to supply raw and war materials to Poland."

It is well to bear in mind Stalin's words last March at the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. After pointing out that the Soviet Union stood for "peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries" and for "peaceful, close, and friendly relations with all the neighboring countries which have common frontiers with the USSR," he declared: *"We stand for the support of nations which are the victims of aggression and are fighting for the independence of their country."*

As far as Germany is concerned, the products she will import from the Soviet Union will be of little assistance to her in waging war. The London *Economist,* the leading conservative economic journal in England, writes: "It is very unlikely that Germany would be able to obtain vast quantities of oil from Russia, whose output has not kept pace with her own requirements." (New York *Times,* September 1.) On the other hand, the industrial products which the USSR will buy from Germany will, according to a Berlin dispatch by Joseph Barnes in the August 21 issue of the New York *Herald Tribune,* "break at least a gap in the monopoly of German machine-making capacity which has been enjoyed until now by the army."

It is from the United States, Britain, France, and other countries, rather than from the Soviet Union, that Germany has been importing her war materials. The New York *Times* of March 25, describing a report issued by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the U. S. Department of Commerce, stated: "Even though the trade [in 1938] had decreased considerably from the previous year, exports of raw materials necessary for operating a war machine were substantial. They constituted the principal part of Germany's purchases from this country."

Q. Was the action of the Soviet Union in signing the pact primarily for its own benefit? Does it leave the working class and the democratic peoples of the world in the lurch?

There can be no conflict between the interests of a socialist state and the interests of the working class and the democratic peoples of capitalist countries. The elimination of class exploitation within the Soviet Union through the overthrow of capitalism has meant the destruction of the class roots of imperialist policy in foreign affairs. And since the struggle for freedom and democracy is international, anything that strengthens the land where freedom and democracy have been most fully attained must inevitably strengthen this struggle everywhere. In his speech to the congress of the Supreme Soviet, Molotov, Soviet premier and commissar of foreign affairs, declared that "our task is to think of the interests of the Soviet people, of the interests of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, all the more since we are firmly convinced that the interests of the USSR coincide with the basic interests of the peoples of other nations."

Thus, the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, far from leaving the working class and democratic peoples of the world in the lurch, has helped them. Certainly a genuine mutual assistance pact with Britain, France, and Poland would have helped still more, but since these countries refused to permit the Red Army to come to the defense of Poland and were using the negotiations in Moscow for the purpose of making a deal with Hitler and isolating the USSR, the latter was compelled to do the next best thing. The non-aggression pact has not only lessened the danger of war between Germany and the Soviet Union, but it has isolated Japan in the Far East and thus proved a boon to China and the United States, and for that matter, to Britain, too, if it seriously wishes to stand up to Japan. The cooling off of Hitler's three other partners in the anti-Comintern alliance, Italy, Spain, and Hungary, is a blow to him and helps Poland and all countries menaced by the Nazi juggernaut. And the refusal of the Soviet Union to serve as a front for the doubledealing game of Chamberlain, Daladier, and Colonel Beck has, for the present at least, prevented a new Munich at the expense of Poland or other small states. Had Britain and France abandoned bluff and signed a real pact with the Soviet Union, the present attack on Poland would probably have been averted.

Q. Isn't there something morally indefensible about signing a pact with a fascist government?

It all depends on the kind of pact. The highest morality is the greatest good for the greatest number. From this standpoint socialism is on a far higher moral plane than capitalism. The Soviet Union has always striven to maintain friendly ecc nomic and political relations with all countries, n matter what the nature of their internal regime It does this not in order to help capitalism, but t strengthen socialism—in other words, to serve th highest moral ends. In keeping with this policy th Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact wit fascist Italy as far back as 1933. At the same tim the USSR has been ready to unite with capitali countries to curb aggression from whatever sourc since peace is also a fundamental interest of th Soviet state, as it is of the peoples of the capitali countries. Carried to its logical extreme, the att tude that a pact with a fascist government is morall wrong even if it serves the ends of peace and socia ism would lead to all kinds of ridiculous cons quences. The Soviet Union would have to break o all intercourse with fascist states, including con munication by mail, telegram, and telephone. Trad unions make agreements with even the most rea tionary employers—to help the members of th unions. The USSR makes agreements with even th most reactionary governments for similar reason

Q. What effect has the pact had on the Communi Parties of the capitalist countries?

Newspaper stories that leading members of th French Communist Party have resigned or th American Communists have torn up their par books have proved to be wishful, with no basis fact. Many of these reports have subsequently be declared "premature" by the very papers tha lished them. NEW MASSES is not, of course, position to speak officially on this question, but wha ever information we have been able to gather co cerning the Communist Party in this country ind cates practically unanimous support of the pa among its members. No evidence has been produc that the situation is different in other countries.

Q. Why weren't the Communists and other progre sives in capitalist countries tipped off in advan about the pact?

It would obviously have been impossible for t Soviet Union to have informed its friends in oth countries without the news reaching the gover ments and the press as well. In diplomatic as military maneuvers, success sometimes depends the element of surprise and the details of a pa ticular tactical move have to be kept secret. Just a strike committee cannot publicly announce all plans without playing into the hands of the e ployer against whom it is conducting the strike, the Soviet Union could not give advance inform tion to its friends and supporters without seriou jeopardizing the success of the pact.

Q. If Chamberlain had signed such a pact at t time, wouldn't the Communists have called it appeasement move?

There is a German proverb to the effect that two people do the same thing, it is not the sar One must consider the Soviet-German Non-Aggr sion Pact not in the abstract, but in its specific c text and particularly in relation to the wh direction of Soviet foreign policy. Chamberlain a Daladier did actually conclude non-aggression pa with Germany after Munich. Those pacts, howev

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were a continuation of the line of Munich, of the efforts of the British and French governments to direct Hitler eastward, at the expense of the countries of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Non-Aggression Pact with Germany is of an entirely different character. It is a consistent expression of the Soviet peace policy. The Soviet Union conceded nothing, merely reaffirming its well known policy of refraining from attacking another country. Hitler, on the other hand, conceded a great deal directly and lost more indirectly. Coming at a time when the Munichites in England and France, together with certain not too shining lights in the Polish government, were preparing, under cover of insincere negotiations with the Soviet Union, to sell Poland down the river and leave the USSR out on a limb, the pact served to disrupt these plans and to place the Soviet Union in a stronger position than before.

Q. Why did the USSR sign the trade agreement with Germany and what will be its effects?

The trade agreement does not initiate new relations since there has always been trade between the two countries. As pointed out in last week's issue, the USSR has repeatedly urged collective economic sanctions against aggressors, but it will not impose a unilateral embargo since this would isolate it and tend to embroil it singlehanded with the totalitarian governments, which is exactly the consummation Chamberlain and Daladier devoutly wish for. At the same time the Soviet government has in recent years greatly reduced its trade with Germany, Italy, and Japan. Soviet exports to these countries dropped from 186,770,000 rubles in 1936 to 67,839,000 rubles in the first nine months of 1938. Soviet imports from these countries declined from 376,266,000 rubles in 1936 to 60,059,000 rubles during the first nine months of 1938. In 1938 Germany occupied fifth place in Soviet trade, whereas before it ranked first.

Negotiations for the new trade agreement were started at the beginning of 1938. But it was not until Hitler agreed to accept practically all the Soviet terms that the pact was signed. Though trade between the two countries will be increased by the pact, it will still remain far below the pre-Hitler figure. As against the 800,000,000 marks which the USSR spent for German industrial goods in 1932, the new agreement provides for a German credit of 200,000,000 marks to the Soviet Union, to be spent within the next two years. During the same period Germany will buy 180,000,000 marks of Soviet commodities, chiefly agricultural products, timber, and raw materials for industry. The terms of the credit are unusually generous, with interest at only 5 percent, and the credit repayable over a period of seven years. These terms are more advantageous than those received from any other country.

Incidentally, the malicious character of the stories about a rapprochement between Germany and the USSR as a result of this trade agreement is evident from the fact that even under the new pact the Soviet Union will buy an average of only 40,000,000 of German goods annually for a two-year period and sell the Reich $36,000,000 a year. Compare this with the figures for German-American trade. In 1938 United States exports to Germany were $107,491,000, and imports from that country were $64,537,000.

. What about the reports that have appeared about a impending Soviet trial of Litvinov and others who worked for an agreement with the democracies?

Litvinov represented not personal but Soviet policy. His resignation did not mean any basic change in that policy whose major objectives are today what they have always been. The Soviet Union still stands for united resistance to aggression. As for the stories of his forthcoming trial, they are of a piece with the tales of the resignation of prominent French Communists. In the New York *Times* of August 29, G. E. R. Gedye, in a dispatch on the congress of the Supreme Soviet, wrote: "In the fifth row of deputies sat former Foreign Commissar Maxim M. Litvinov."

Q. Why have some liberals, who hitherto have supported the Soviet Union, attacked the non-aggression pact?

As Alter Brody showed in his article in last week's NEW MASSES, the behavior of certain liberals in the present case is not unusual. The same doleful cries have been raised in the past at every new development of Soviet policy. While the reasons may vary for different individuals, on the whole the waverings of some of those who call themselves friends of the Soviet Union are due to their failure to grasp the fundamental principles on which the Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviet system are based. The approach of these people is eclectic. They approve of this or that Soviet policy which appears to them good and may even believe that they approve of the Soviet system as a whole so long as it develops according to their preconceptions of what socialism ought to be. Actually, however, they fail to comprehend the tremendous gulf that lies between socialism and capitalism; they fail to see that *every* Soviet policy is the product of an economic and social system that is fundamentally different from the capitalist order. It is impossible for the Soviet Union to form an alliance for aggression because the classes that would profit from such collaboration (which, incidentally, are powerfully entrenched in even the most democratic capitalist countries) have been permanently removed from Soviet life. Bearing this in mind, one must look beyond surface appearances to realize that Soviet policy on all questions, whatever the forms of its development, remains essentially a socialist, democratic policy, benefiting not only the 170,000,000 people of the USSR, but the common people of all countries.

Mr. Gedye Corrects

G. E. R. GEDYE, New York *Times* Moscow correspondent, startled a good many progressives in his first report of Premier Molotov's speech. Gedye's cable of September 1 read as follows:

"In consequence of the pact [Soviet-German] the Soviet Union would be obliged to avoid entering a war against Germany on the side of Britain and France, he explained.

The paragraph ran exactly that way, the quotation marks not closing, and the reader was unable to determine whether Gedye was giving Molotov's wording or his own impression.

In his cable of the following day, however, Gedye corrected himself, and reported Molotov's version exactly. It was a significant change of phrasing:

"As a result of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Treaty the Soviet Union is not obliged to enter a war on the side of England against Germany or on the side of Germany against England."

Ad Reinhardt

"The tall prisoner identifies himself as Oberleutnant Wotan of the 183rd Reichswehr Division."

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Chicago Hearst: A Strike Epic

Nine months of red ink. The heroic and well managed strike of the guildsmen. The "Herex" gets the vapors and the "American" faces a showdown. The first of two articles.

Chicago.

THE *Herald & Examiner,* Hearst's morning tabloid in Chicago, had been so thin for eight months that it looked like a racing form. Sporting gentlemen who bought it under that impression were disappointed, however, for Hank Simmons, the *Examiner's* expert on the races, is one of the five hundred members of the Chicago Newspaper Guild who, last December, went on strike against Hearst. Despite the strike, Hank Simmons and Dee Sparr of the *American* have continued to practice their profession, distributing *Strike Handicaps* at the race tracks round Chicago, giving the reasons for the strike and the horses they expect to win that day's races. They have picked more winners this season than any other handicappers in Chicago, far surpassing the strikebreaking experts on the *American* and the *Examiner,* who are willing enough but who evidently do not know much about horses.

The Hearst strike in Chicago was in its ninth month when the management two weeks ago suspended publication of the daily *Herald & Examiner.* The *Herex* was closed down three hours after guild negotiators had met with the management, whose representatives mentioned nothing about the coming move. The strikers immediately announced their determination to keep up the strike "no matter how they switch names or editions," and offered their "intense sympathy for their fellow members of legitimate organized labor —the printing, driving, and other craftsmen— whose interests have been sacrificed to years of Hearst mismanagement and fundamental opposition to all organized labor." In a few days strike headquarters had sent all guild locals a complete list of the scabs fired when the *Herex* collapsed, to keep these worthies isolated when they seek jobs elsewhere.

In a steel strike all a company has to do is move a crew of professional strikebreakers into its plant and face the public with a look of virtuous resignation. Of course there is always a drop in efficiency when the strikebreakers take over. On a newspaper the problem is more complicated. Late in November last year the *Examiner* put on a half-dozen new editorial employees at $65 a week. At the time they had nothing of any importance to do, but everyone in the plant knew why they were hired.

Still, on the first day of the strike, the highly paid editors of the *Examiner* had no idea how they were going to get out the paper. They held a conference. They were willing, if it turned out to be necessary in the interests of the Chief and the organization, to do some work themselves. Fortunately it was not necessary. Publisher Meigs wired the other Hearst papers to send strikebreakers; the *American* would pay their plane fares. A few strikebreakers flew up from Atlanta, Ga. When the Milwaukee *News* folded, all the editors who were on contracts came down to Chicago. Several promotion men and advertising solicitors with literary ambitions were transferred to the editorial department. One promotion man was the only help the *Examiner* sports editor had in getting out the sports page. College correspondents and copy boys were promoted to rewrite men. A Hearst man went through the bars on West Madison Street and stood drinks in a sociable way for the muddled ex-newspapermen who were hanging around hoping for something to turn up. The executives hysterically hired anyone in the first few days who showed up at the office and said he had experience. The Remington-Rand employment agency sent people over. At the end of the week both papers had more editorial employees than before the strike.

THE TROUBLES OF THE SCABS

The inefficiency of the new staff was startling. Most of them were cynical enough not to work very hard, but even the conscientious scabs were disappointments. Except for copy off the International News Service and Associated Press wires the papers carried no news the first few days, not having anyone who knew how to get it. A few local stories were copied out of the other Chicago papers and awkwardly rewritten. Headlines and captions were preposterous. After a few weeks the papers restored their local columns, signed by scabs, in hopes of getting the columnists back to work out of a feeling of professional pride. Half a dozen sports columnists came back. Mr. Meigs put a bounty of $50 on every striker a scab was able to get back to work.

After a while three or four striking photographers came in and assured Mr. Meigs that they had been misled. When Cardinal Mundelein had come back from Rome after the Papal election, neither of the Hearst papers had been able to get a picture, the other Chicago papers refusing to give them one they were not using. Even after the back-to-work movement they did not have much success in getting pictures. Newspaper cameramen dislike scabs. When all the papers were covering the same assignment the Hearst man would find his plates prematurely exposed, and somebody always got in the way when he wanted to take a picture.

Police reporting used to be an easy assignment on a paper. After the strike, when a story broke, one reporter would ask the Hearst man out to have a drink, and the Hearst man would be so delighted that someone was speaking to him that he would accept with pleasure. Meanwhile, everyone else would cover the story. Nobody telephoned the story in from the press room, but from out-of-the-way offices where the Hearst man could not hear.

One reporter who could not remain philo-

Hearst Strike Story

IN 1936 the American Newspaper Guild rapidly organized the editorial departments of the two Chicago Hearst papers, the *Evening American* and the *Herald & Examiner,* and they reluctantly raised the pay of some of their employees and started working a five day week. But Hearst is stubborn. Through 1937 guild members were fired, in the arrogant Hearst fashion, forty or fifty at a time. On Jan. 20, 1938, the guild took a strike vote. Almost at once the papers signed an editorial contract. To represent the commercial departments the guild was obliged by the management to ask for a Labor Board election, though there was no other union in the field. On the first day of the hearings the other union appeared—an association which had no name but was soon christened Newspaper Commercial Associates by William Green. More guild leaders were fired. Leaders of the company union got raises and better jobs. The guild brought an unfair-practices case against the papers; and anyone who testified to the conditions of terrorism and intimidation under which Hearst has always believed newspapermen function most efficiently, was fired. The guild figured that the editorial contract had been violated eighty-seven times — the management had contracted to raise pay and had not done it, to pay overtime and had not paid it, to consult the guild on economy firings and had continued to fire guildsmen recklessly in quantity lots. All through the summer people were fired. On Thanksgiving forty branch circulation managers were fired. On December 2, twenty more were fired. On Christmas fifty more would be fired when the *American* cut an edition. The management intended to leave no guildsmen in the plant by the time of the Labor Board election. "This is a showdown," said Merrill C. Meigs, publisher of the *American.* On December 5, at four o'clock in the morning, the guild struck.

Recently, after over eight months of strike, the Chicago *Herald & Examiner* quit publication as a daily. The printing, driving, and other craft workers were discharged and the paper combined with the Sunday Chicago *American* as in New York. The Hearst management still stalls on negotiations with the guild. The strikers reply with more pep and resolve to bring the strike to a quick, victorious end. On guild appeals, Pepsodent, former big advertiser in the struck Hearst papers, withdrew its copy.

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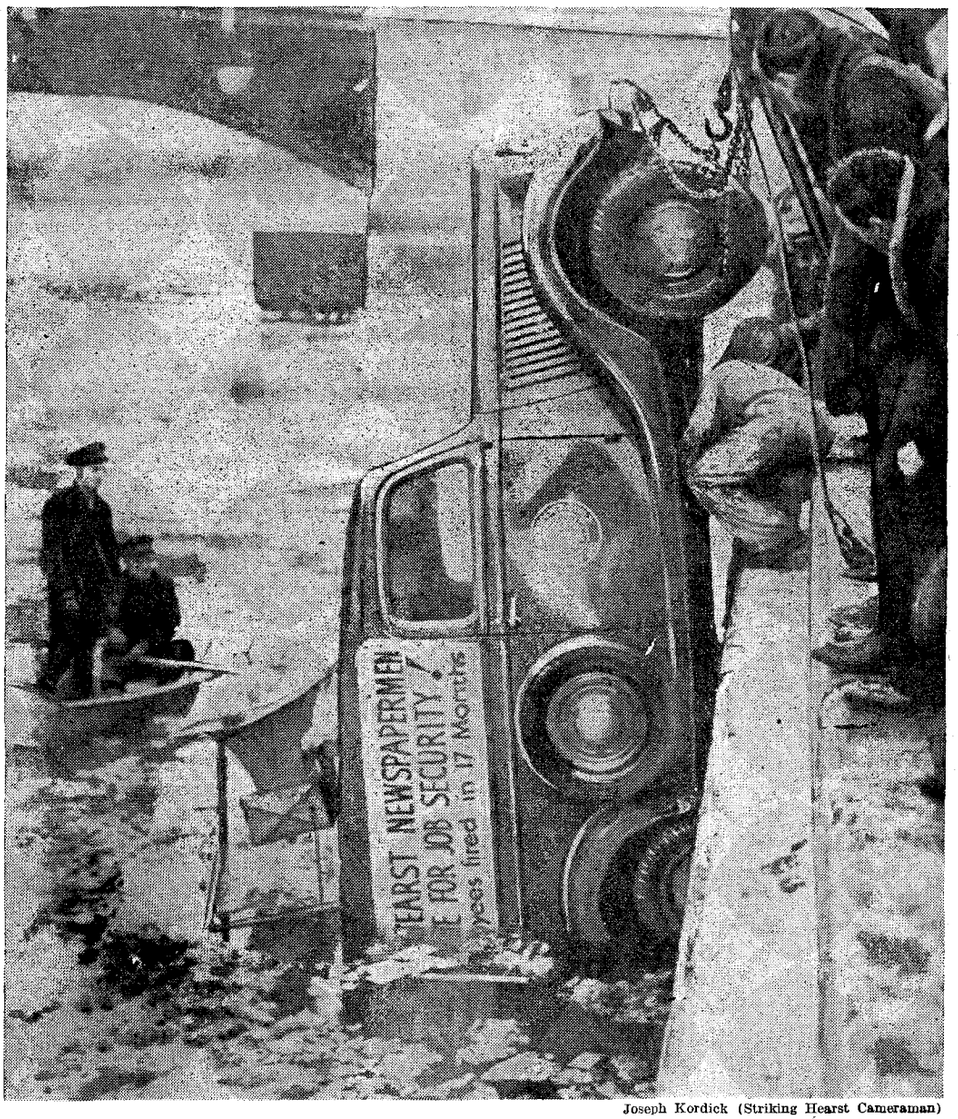
sophical in the face of such treatment got into a fight in the county building, and after that no Hearst man went on an assignment without two or three bodyguards. The Hearst reporter, with no way of knowing what was going on, would sit unhappily in the press room for a while, flanked by two heavy-set, placid bruisers, and then he would go back to the office and copy his story out of the *Daily News*. There was almost no one on the two papers who did not drink too much.

THE TROUBLES OF THE STOCKHOLDERS

For some years Hearst had wished he was not the owner of the *Examiner*. It was a headache. It leased its plant to the *American*, which was in faintly better financial shape, and with the rent the *American* paid it was just able to keep going. No one wanted to take it off Hearst's hands. Last fall, not very hopefully, he turned it into a tabloid. In January John Nance Garner pressed a button in Washington to set new *Examiner* tabloid presses running. Hearst had done his best on three occasions to elect Garner President, and Garner, though the guild strike was then going on, felt obligated. The new presses did not help the *Examiner*.

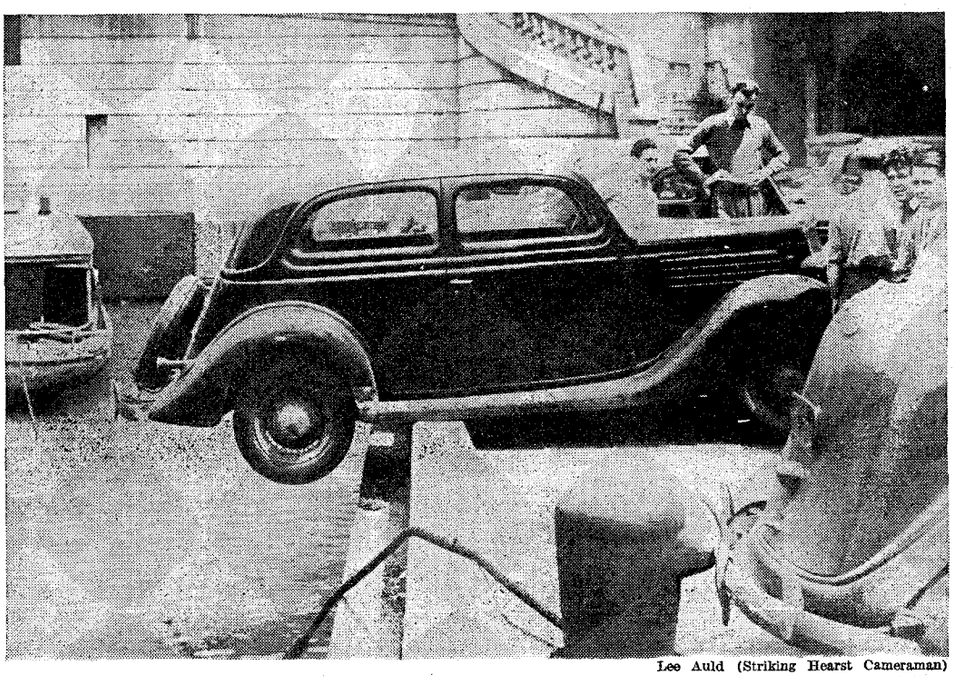
In July, to illustrate the *Examiner's* plight, the fourth issue of an eight-page strike tabloid, the *Hearst Strike News*, had more lines of advertising in it than the final edition of that day's paper. Hearst executives say that the guild strike, if anything, has helped their circulation, but whether or not the publ[illegible]as believed that, the advertisers have not [illegible]ved it. The small amount of advertising in the *Examiner* and the *American* has been testimony to the fact that the advertising agencies have not thought they were getting what they paid for. They were not paying much, for the advertising rates in the struck papers fell till they were about the lowest for metropolitan papers in the country.

The Hearst organization was in as bad shape for a strike last December as the Rome-Berlin axis was for war. Hearst, too, is short on raw materials and his credit is terrible. Recently the strikers got up a pamphlet for Hearst stockholders, to show them how much the Chicago strike had cost. It had cost $5,000,000—about equal to the combined yearly salaries of the 150 executives of the Hearst enterprises. That was not including the fairly large sum the *Examiner* would have lost anyway. The *Examiner* at the time of the strike had three managing editors, five city editors, and the usual half-dozen Hearst executives who hold conferences every day to discuss their golf scores; the strike could have been averted by firing one or two of them and using their salaries to live up to the guild contract. But it was not such a simple question. The new Hearst owners were hardheaded business men, and they did not think the organization would ever make money again till the Newspaper Guild was smashed. Hearst has had two guild strikes before, one in Seattle, one in Milwaukee, and the guild was stronger at the end of them than it was at



Joseph Kordick (Striking Hearst Cameraman)

THE STRIKERS' "ATHENIA." *Like the Nazis, the scabs used sinking tactics. A guild sound truck, dumped in the river by Hearst goons.*



Lee Auld (Striking Hearst Cameraman)

AN ATTEMPT THAT FAILED. *They tried the same thing on the car of a striking circulation man. Strikebreakers lammed before finishing the job.*

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Issued by the Council of Evening American and Herald & Examiner AFL Union Employes

NLRB EXPOSES CIO PLOT

- - And Here He Is Again!

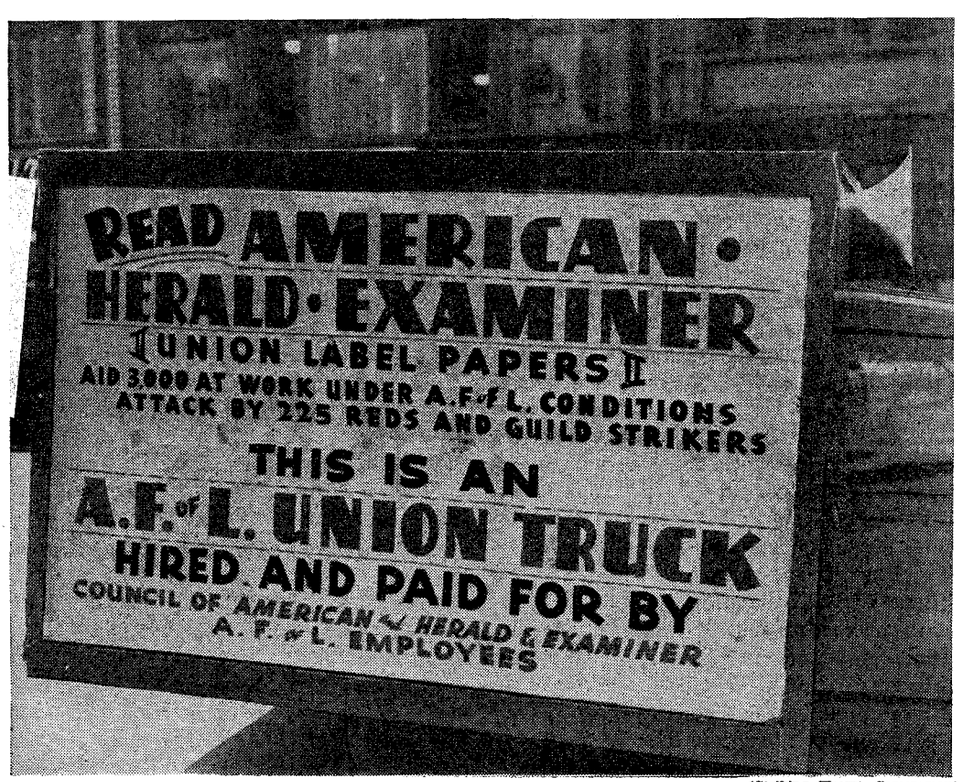
RECORD BARES CLAIMS TO ALL JOBS IN PLANT

Ed Baker Routs Knife Fighter and Gets His Picture Taken

HE WHO STEALS MY NAME —

New Masses

THEY LIKE THEIR GOON. *Although many AFL unions in Chicago have helped the strikers, those at the Hearst plants have played a disgraceful role. Ed Baker, shown being congratulated by employers in the main picture and as he and his crank handle charged the picket-line in the inset, suddenly became an AFL hero at the struck plants. The page is reproduced from the organ of the scabs, a paper put out to compete with the one put out by the guildsmen.*



READ AMERICAN • HERALD • EXAMINER

UNION LABEL PAPERS

AID 3,000 AT WORK UNDER A.F. of L. CONDITIONS ATTACK BY 225 REDS AND GUILD STRIKERS

THIS IS AN A.F. of L. UNION TRUCK

HIRED AND PAID FOR BY COUNCIL OF AMERICAN and HERALD & EXAMINER A. F. of L. EMPLOYEES

(Striking Hearst Cameraman)

NEW CIRCULATION TECHNIQUES. *Those who remember how Hearst went after Chicago readers will be interested in this new approach.*

the beginning. That the guild in Chicago, after $5,000,000 has been spent to break it, is stronger now than when the strike started, is just one of those business blunders committed even by experienced institutions like the Chase National Bank.

BOTH SIDES

The *Hearst Strike News,* the little guild tabloid whose press run has become larger as the press run of the Chicago Hearst papers became smaller, so distressed the Hearst management that it had its company union get out two issues of a tabloid of its own: the *Labor Herald,* containing the information that the guild was communistically inclined, and that out of 3,108 union members in the plant there were only five hundred quitters (the 3,108 union members were members of printing trades unions, not involved in the guild strike). In the second issue a man in the Sunday department of the *Examiner,* Irwin St. John Tucker, wrote a poem called "The Gyp," with the refrain:

> Tramp on then, tramp on in your gutters,
> Starvation is good for your soul!
> But not for Sapoznik and Weinberg,
> Alexkovsky, Yablonky, and Wohl!

The names were chosen with care. Religious organizations called on the Hearst management to protest the anti-Semitism. Reverend Tucker, who over the weekend is pastor of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, the Little Church at the End of the Road, explained to *Editor and Publisher* that he never knew the paper was going to publish the poem; he had only written it for his own amusement. The Hearst management called in John Robinson, the editor of the paper. Mr. Robinson, who last year appeared with Fritz Kuhn in a Chicago rally of the Bund, said he had not seen anything wrong with it. From then on, said the management, he would submit his copy to Mr. Meigs before publication. In New York, the Hearst papers published a leaflet denying all imputations of anti-Semitism. In Chicago they filled their columns with Jewish news and the *American* bought Emil Ludwig's *Life of Hitler.* The *Examiner* sent a copy reader named Meyer Zolotareff around to all the Chicago Jewish organizations. To one Jewish leader Zolotareff said, "It is definitely not true that no Jews work on Hearst papers. I want you to meet Mr. Shainmark, our assistant managing editor." "How do you do, Mr. Shainmark," said the Jewish leader politely. "Are you a strike-breaker too?"

On Sunday morning I went to call on Rev. St. John Tucker at the Little Church at the End of the Road, in North Chicago. It is called the Artists and Writers Church, because of Reverend Tucker's verses in the Sunday *Examiner,* signed Friar Tuck. It is small and grotesque, the walls covered with mottoes, autographed photos, religious water colors, and framed copies of Friar Tuck's poems. After the service I asked Reverend Tucker, a tall, hairy man in a torn cassock, to tell me about the strike. "You want to talk

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about the guild?" he said. "Those crazy lunatics. Come downstairs; I don't like to talk about those rabbits here. I don't like to get mad in front of the altar."

We went downstairs to his study, on the walls of which were more photographs and water colors. On the desk was a clay head of St. Francis whistling to the birds. Reverend Tucker let me sit at the desk and take notes while he walked up and down restlessly.

"As far as I know," he said, "I was the first member of the guild in Chicago. I stayed with it quite a while, till the CIO, in fact the Communist group, got in there. You know the difference between horizontal and vertical unions. I was very much in favor of vertical unions myself at one time, that was when the old gang was doing things, the old IWW. But I was disgusted with the way it worked out. The circulation crew and the copy boys who had just joined the union had an equal voice with the old hands, men who had been there for years and knew what they were talking about. Those youngsters—when some orator got those fellers whipped up they wouldn't listen to reason.

"This is what happened. Last December 5 they voted for this strike. But not everybody. The leaders of the guild—they're a wild bunch—called a secret meeting and only invited those members who were known to be belligerent. Wohl and that bunch, they push things through simply by shouting down anyone who doesn't like what they're doing. Strikes aren't won by yelling. I know. I've been in them.

"Last January the contract was signed, and it was a very fine contract. They should have stuck to it. But not them. In December this bitterness began again and the strike and the secret meeting was called after a feller named Harry Read, R-E-A-D, was fired for having stolen some photographs from the morgue and having them reproduced for his own profit. Those charges were subsequently proved. He could have had duplicates of those pictures by asking for them and paying a couple of dollars. He was chairman of the Hearst unit of the guild, he was one of that crowd that was going around circulating pamphlets and trying to start some excitement. His defense was that you can't fire a guild officer for stealing. They struck to defend the right of guild officers to steal. Well, that's not a strike! You don't strike when you're working under a contract! If you have a contract and the contract is broken you get damages under the law!

"Well, a lot of other fellers were pretty sick and disgusted when I was booed out of a meeting in February, and we got out of the guild. We didn't like the way it was being run by a bunch of Russians. Some of them, of course, are of American descent. Of course you might ask why some of us older fellers didn't stay in and clean up this condition, and maybe that's what we should have done.

"The Editorial Employees Association that we formed is in no sense a company union. It's an American Federation of Labor union. We know all about company unions and what they are. I have always believed labor should have the right to organize itself and I still do. We have everybody in our union—managing editors, well, not managing editors, they're ineligible, but news editors, copy desk men, reporters, in other words men who have been with the paper fifteen or twenty years. There are men who have been working there thirty-five or forty years. There's an example of job security for you. Most of those rabbits out on strike are copy boys.

"Those copy boys would get in there and yell their heads off for Wohl. Two hundred and seven went on strike originally; in the following week thirty-five returned to work. In the last two weeks there's been a steady dribble of strikers coming back and tearing up their guild cards. There are only fifteen or twenty still on strike now.

"It isn't a strike. I know what a strike is, and it isn't this breast-thumping business. If it were a straight-out issue of labor—what the thunder, this is what the issue was. Dick Seller announced that he was in this thing to Seattle-ize Chicago! You know what Seattle is—everything tied up whenever Dave Beck says the word.

"Why, Wohl was never in the labor movement before. All that gang, they think they're going to change everything—they have nothing to do with labor. Wohl, Yablonky, Alexkovsky—well, you get an idea of their nationality. Wohl's of German parentage, but of Jewish stock, and Yablonky is a Russian.

"This is a hardfisted town. Chicago's had plenty of labor strife. I've been a member of the Socialist Party, joined the same week I was ordained in 1912 in St. John's Cathedral in New York. I know what strikes are. I was strong for organization in 1906 in New Orleans. But when a union gets into the hands of these wild-eyed lunatics, that's not a labor movement, that's mountebankery. They're just a bunch of yammerers. If Harry Wohl wants to sue me for libel I'd be only too delighted to get him up on a witness stand.

"So far as we're concerned you're perfectly welcome to talk to the guild officers and get their side. John Fitzpatrick at the AFL office will tell you what he thinks of this crazy outfit. Lewis is a man of great ability and I don't say he's insincere because I'm convinced he is sincere. But he's underhanded. He obtained power by totally underhanded methods. Well, you can't pull the same type of thing on a bunch of editors as you can on a bunch of Bohemians and Slovaks and Lithuanians in a mining camp.

"You should go down and see a meeting of the Federation of Labor some Sunday afternoon. The headquarters down there is a beautiful place. Palatial!

"The Amalgamated Clothing headquarters is very fine too. When I was night assistant at St. Mark's in the Bowery back yonder in New York, Sidney Hillman and that bunch were just getting their start. I used to go on the picketlines a number of times in Union Square. I held funerals for strikers that got killed.

"I married three fellers that are on the picketline here. It makes me feel kind of bad every day when I go into the building and fellers I know and like come up and call me a scab. At the beginning of the strike, we took it all in good humor. I'd get up there and say, Come on, boys, let's yell in rhythm. And I'd lead them. But then the leaders decided they had to end all this good fellowship.

"The way the first trouble started, one of the circulation men was coming back to the office to leave the money he'd collected and they tried to keep him out. He pleaded with them, he said, Come on, let me in, I've got to leave this money. Then one of those pickets hit him over the head with one of those signs. They call them Hearst goons, but you know as well as I do that fellers that go around at night with money in their pockets got to defend themselves. They just carry a little piece of rubber hose inside here, and when this feller got hit with the sign he pulled out his rubber hose to protect himself. What did they expect, tackling a circulation gang of a large daily?

"The shop is AFL from top to bottom. We haven't got a closed shop, but we do insist that to get the benefits of the contract a man must join the union. Why don't you talk to Larry Kelly? He's the president of the Editorial Association. I'll get him on the phone.

"Well, that bunch is crazy for publicity. You know the picture of the short little feller they call the Hearst thug? I forget his name, but he was a Jew. Actually. Funny, isn't it? Well, when that picture was taken, coming toward the camera, with the crank in his hand, he was coming to the defense of his pal. He'd just picked up the first thing he found.

"You saw the pictures of that car, that sound truck Hearst thugs were supposed to have dumped in the river. If you were going to dump a car in the river, you'd dump it so it was in the river, wouldn't you? They didn't even disconnect the batteries of the sound system. You tell me anyone who wanted to destroy a truck would do that? It's kid stuff. If you want to wreck a union truck you wreck it. I know that. Not that I've ever done it myself, but I've seen plenty of violence back yonder. Those fellers who are running this show don't know what a fight is."

ROBERT TERRALL.

The Guild Goes to Bat

THE Chicago Hearst strikers have a softball team with an enterprising press agent, Eddie Partridge. Brother Partridge noted a picture in the *Pilot*, National Maritime Union paper, showing some baseball bats recovered by New Orleans NMU strikers from waterfront scabs. He wrote to the NMU about them and soon got the following reply from A. L. Duffy, secretary of the Gulf District Committee of the NMU:

"Your letter was acted upon at the regular joint membership meeting here in New Orleans and the membership unanimously voted to send you the bats, and with them our heartiest wishes for success in your fight against Dirty Willie. We are only too glad to have the bats put to better use than whacking good union men over the head."

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All Is Not Fair

Why Grover Whalen's big show has not brought full support from the public. Some false notions about the Fair.

WHEN I was only a boy, I visited a carnival out at Sodus Point on Irondequoit Bay in upstate New York. Twelve tents lined a muddy street back from the water. In seven of them hoochie-coochie girls did their stuff. In five, wheels spun.

What I am getting at is that the carnival was jammed with customers. And I had a heck of a time.

But that was in 1907 and I doubt if the same show even in the same spot would be as popular today. But if, by rubbing Grover A. Whalen's magic lamp, you could transfer any one of the magnificent, stupendous, educational, inspiring, and thrilling exhibits of the 1939 New York World's Fair to the middle of the Mojave Desert, you'd get a crowd.

The former police commissioner, former executive of John Wanamaker's department store, assumed direction of the great show on Flushing Meadows. It was his baby. He organized it, ballyhooed the sale of its bonds, poked his finger into every nook and cranny of it. He succeeded in creating a spectacle which in many respects is the greatest on earth.

FALSE NOTIONS

Nevertheless, it has met with disappointing support from the public. A curious psychological attitude toward the Fair grew up in the public mind; not until the last month was it possible to overcome the effect of certain errors, responsibility for which rests in part on the Fair administration, partly upon circumstances beyond control.

Many of the false notions about the Fair are the result of weaknesses in the promotion campaign. Despite the fact that Mr. Whalen is best known for his ability to project his own personality into newspaper columns, his staff of promotion experts have proved to be poor students of the mass mind.

The Fair's bad press at the May opening was variously caused. Many of the exhibits were unfinished. Restaurants catering to the masses were invisible. Transportation within the Fair grounds was unsatisfactory and expensive. As a result, three popular objections grew. "Let's wait until they finish the damn thing," said the cautious. "I can't afford to pay $7 for dinner," ruefully smiled the underprivileged. "My arches are weak," said the elderly. If you combine these three classes of potential customers, you have a sizeable composite of millions.

The expensive corps of bright publicity boys did nothing to correct this situation until it was pretty late. They permitted a story to escape which blamed the unfinished condition of the buildings upon the labor unions, which, it was said, were stalling for overtime. This was a rumor invented at the time of the Paris Exposition—and by the same clique. In fact, it was voiced by a foreign representative who undoubtedly learned this trick of discrediting trade unions from the French fascist leader de la Rocque. As for the second point, food was and is relatively cheap in many good restaurants. Weeks passed before facts were assembled to prove this, with the result that would-be Fair visitors in moderate circumstances stayed home or went to Coney Island for a day of cheap fun.

Internal transportation facilities make it possible to travel from one end of the Fair to the other for 10 cents. This omnibus skirts the Fair grounds. But the visitor, especially the elderly person, footsore and weary, may find a day's transportation on this bus will cost 50 cents. The price should be a nickel. Newcomers to the Fair are likely to drop into the roaming bus, which penetrates streets and byways at 25 cents a head, a figure entirely too high for the average change pocket.

But it was the unexpected indifference and hostility of many newspapermen which brought down the press on the Fair. To many New York journalists, Whalen was an old story of gardenias and "WELCOME TO OUR CITY," confetti-strewn parades. Ballyhoo methods of the tempestuous twenties, today crude and oldfashioned, were carried into the Fair's preliminary publicity, which featured the old glad-hand, Rotarian, do-it-for-dear-old-Yale method. Lacking was the geniality, the penetrating warmth and foresight which must mark the public relations genius in this latter day of economic complexity. The saluting guards, the yacht out in the bay, the big business principle involved in creating a picture of administrative infallibility, was not to the liking of the contemporary politically minded newsmen. What was needed was less promotion and more hospitality. A Chicago newspaperman tells me that much of the success of the Chicago extravaganza of 1933 was due to the fact that the Midwest Fair belonged to the visiting newspaperman. He could pass the gate with himself and village. He could eat and drink *ad lib*. Wife and kiddies were treated like royalty on tour. There was no gardenia, no mood of City Hall *circa* 1928.

At Whalen's Wharf, reporters get a pass. And that's all. They must shell out 75 cents for wife and the regular gate fee for each and every kid. Result—"What the hell kind of a joint is this?"

But the outland yokelry, yokelry thanks be no longer, was also kept away in millions by the fantastically bad press which resulted from the New York Hotel Association's policy of raising hotel rates and of giving notice to permanent guests who, last spring, were enjoying a low rental. This story hit the press amidpage. Of course, Mr. Whalen had nothing to do with this policy. But he should have learned from the Chicago experience. The Chicago Fair advertised far and wide that room rates were to be maintained at normal throughout the Fair by agreement with landlords. New York's Fair executives never thought of this trick.

TRADE UNION POLICY

On the other hand, the essentially progressive nature of the Fair and the manner in which it cooperated with trade unions won the support of the forces fighting for liberal democracy and for the emancipation of labor. True, there were many labor disputes, because of the fact that the principle of collective bargaining was generously applied throughout. Its very application served to rouse the antagonism of anti-labor employers and diplomatic representatives of foreign nations who in their homelands prefer to ignore the demands of the workingman. Mr. Whalen showed an unexpectedly liberal coloration in his handling of these affairs, going so far as to parade the trade unionists as a public expression of this point of view.

However, he came a cropper on the question of hiring Negro workers in proportion to their ratio in the population of New York City. A long campaign against Negro discrimination, which involved picketing, created a poor impression upon that section of the public which has learned the importance of protecting the rights of all citizens, no matter what their race, creed, or color.

Another error was reliance upon a type of publicity which is outworn in metropolitan New York. I refer to the "nude" gag. The Fair administration publicly maintains a policy of underplaying the G-string. All of which is quite all right. But the *Daily News* conducted a large and specious campaign pretending that Rosita Royce's body was a sight worth coming miles to see. Fact of the matter is that New Yorkers, educated in anatomy by Professor Minsky, are bored by the feminine chassis. The unofficial publicity was a dud, which failed to titillate the ears of the wise guys. To make things worse, protests from reformers and notoriety seekers resulted in an announcement that brassieres were *de rigueur*, but bare bosoms taboo. The result was to keep away the adolescents and the senile—and to make the Funzone anything but a funny place for concessionaires.

And this leads us to the question of why the Funzone is a flop. For several months after the opening, prices for shows of the midway type were as high as 40 cents and averaged more than 25 cents, including rides and other mechanical amusements. Tabloid musicals, such as N. T. G.'s Congress of Beauty, had little more to offer than what anyone may view in any number of Broadway night clubs, so they folded. Concessionaires blame the high prices on high costs, which include such charges by Mr. Whalen as $40 a week for water used in sprinkling lawns or flushing toilets, $136 rental for turnstiles, $35 rental for change-making machines, and $1 a day for garbage removal.

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Politics has entered the picture, politics of an unsavory type. It is said that Borough President George U. Harvey's feud with Whalen is based upon the unwillingness of the Fair administration to yield to hints that it wouldn't be a bad idea to play ball with the Queens local government. The Red-baiting Harvey has an alliance with fascists throughout the city. He has lined up William Griffin and his notorious pro-fascist *Enquirer* in a demand for Whalen's scalp and the appointment of dear old Jimmy Walker as boss of the show. This combination of old reactionary Tammanyites with the ultra-reactionary Queens Republican is a normal one; the alliance has carried on a guerrilla warfare against the Fair, with aid from the Coughlinites, who have circulated propaganda against the Fair because it houses no Nazi exhibit but features the magnificent Soviet Pavilion. Mr. Whalen is to be commended for his refusal to knuckle to the Harveyite bludgeoning.

I have thus far omitted the single issue which has dominated all discussion of the failure of the Fair to attract the expected throngs. That is, of course, the 75 cent admission price. The cost sheets of the Fair are not open to me, and it may be that profit was impossible at a lower rate. There are those who insist that no Fair corporation expects to make money, and that none with the sole exception of Chicago got out of the red. However, it has been interesting to observe that the improved attendance in recent weeks has followed a curve irrespective of the price, rising during weekdays when the 75 cent rate has been maintained about proportionately to the weekend increase when the price has been 50 cents. Of course much of the gain may be attributed to the fact that added thousands have visited the Fair on Saturdays and Sundays and have brought back the message that it is a unique and completely satisfying show. But the decisive factor has been the slow disintegration of false notions about the Fair and an improvement in its press. The public is becoming convinced that it is not exclusively a rich man's playground, that food is cheap, that the admission price is fair, that room rent in New York is moderate, that transportation facilities are swift and inexpensive.

New Yorkers, distracted by myriad entertainments at home, possessed of parks and beaches, theaters, night clubs, and their own imposing cosmopolitan cultural life, are tough customers. Afraid to fall for phony gold bricks, many have failed to notice that this Fair is a brick of real gold. The amazing scientific exhibits, the display of international wealth, the progressive heart of the Fair, exemplified best by the Soviet Pavilion, the WPA Building, the pathetic Czechoslovakian Building, the Swedish Pavilion, the federal, states, and municipal edifices, the life and light, the color and the taste of humanity at work and at play—it's all worth seeing. It is to be hoped that the mistakes of the past will be corrected and that Flushing Meadows will continue to house in 1940 and even in 1941 an exhibition which all America should visit and enjoy.

LEW LEVENSON.

Mischa Richter

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No Far Eastern Munich

THE second imperialist war is going on in Europe. But the Far East remains one of its fronts. A major corollary of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was the easing of Japanese pressure upon England and the United States, which reflects also the strengthened position of China.

British diplomacy in the Far East during the past decade can only be explained in the same terms as the refusal of tory England to support Ethiopia, Spain, and Czechoslovakia despite the crucial positions of these nations in the lifelines of the empire. The British tories were prepared to assist Japan, as they assisted Germany, for the purpose of preparing an attack upon the Soviet Union, thwarting the victory of the Chinese people, and arriving at terms with Japan at the expense of the United States. The Soviet non-aggression pact with Germany scotched all that. However, just because Soviet action broke the back of Japanese pro-axis policy, the Chamberlain government attempts to use this circumstance to bring about Far Eastern cooperation with the Japanese. In the "Washington Merry-Go-Round," for September 4, Drew Pearson and Robert Allen report that the retiring British ambassador, Sir Ronald Lindsay, called upon the State Department "to explain that his government, long at sword's point with the Japanese, now was trying frantically to negotiate a deal. . . . The British propose to patch things up with the Japanese by recognizing many of their claims in China, in return for which they want Japan to mass an army against Siberia."

The changes in the Japanese Cabinet likewise reenforce the possibility of closer Japanese cooperation with Great Britain. Nor would it be mistaking the basic tory policy to emphasize that its unwilling war against German fascism does not preclude a Munich in the Far East.

Needless to say, China and the Soviet Union would be the direct victims of such a policy. But equally as much would the national interests of the United States suffer. Like the Soviet Union, the United States is now in a unique position to exercise independent pressure against Japan in the East, just as the best interests of American and world peace can be served by independent American action for a democratic (not a Munich) peace in Europe. America's basic and long-range interest can only be served by the victory of the Chinese people, which requires a complete embargo upon Japan, credits and material aid to China, and a Far Eastern foreign policy completely independent of Downing Street.

Labor Day

LABOR DAY was the second day of world war. In England and France, throughout the world, democratic labor was closing its ranks, sealing the splits, readying itself for the fight against fascism and the appeasers of fascism. Workers everywhere felt the urgency of defeating the enemy on every front.

In the United States the heads of the two great trade union federations addressed their membership and the people. William Green, speaking from Duluth, Minn., and John L. Lewis, speaking from Ogden, Utah, both spoke of labor's needs in the face of the world menace, but the difference in what they said was the difference between what each represents in labor leadership.

William Green spoke of negotiations with the CIO much in the way that the Chamberlain representatives speak of their dealings with the Soviet Union. He tried to put the onus of the breakdown on John L. Lewis, claiming that Lewis was the man who stood in the way of cooperation. It is not unjustified to suspect that Green's "unity" plan would have profited militant labor as little as the British plans would have aided peace.

Lewis spared no words in condemning the tory bloc that sabotaged recovery at the last Congress. Although the capitalist press, in reporting the speech, tried to make it an attack on the administration, it was nothing of the sort. Lewis put the finger on labor's enemies, exactly as a few weeks ago he pinned down John Garner. He talked of the "cold brutality" and the "callous indifference" of the tory coalition. Indeed, his bitterness ran over into an unjustified criticism of the administration's concern over the European war. It is, Lewis felt, an evasion of the domestic problems of depression and unemployment. For an answer to this, Lewis might examine the attitude of bona fide labor leaders in countries menaced only more immediately by fascism than is the United States. They know that labor must fight fascism two ways, as it attempts to impose itself by military aggression and as it insinuates itself by reaction at home.

The Bigger the Lie

It is of the highest importance that the press and the radio use the utmost caution to discriminate between actual verified fact on the one hand and mere rumor on the other. I can add to that by saying that I hope the people of this country will also discriminate most carefully between news and rumor. Do not believe of necessity everything you hear or read. Check up on it first.—PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

THE Hitler dictum of the bigger the lie the more likely it is to be believed seems to have been accepted in toto by the big business press in regard to the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. This time it is not Hearst who is the sole or worst offender. Take that eminently respectable dowager of American journalism, the New York *Times*. During the early years of the Soviet Republic the *Times* distinguished itself by a campaign that has become a classic of the technique of journalistic fakery. Apparently history is repeating. Take the story of the Soviet "military mission" to Berlin. On Sunday the early editions of the *Times* carried on page 1, in the middle of the sixth column, an anonymous Berlin dispatch under the headline: "RUSSIAN GENERALS GREETED IN BERLIN." The dispatch actually concerned the German reply to the British ultimatum, and one had to turn to its continuation on page 13, toward the end of the story, to find any mention of the alleged Russian generals. Not satisfied with the way the story read, the *Times* decided to improve on it. In later editions it was recast so that the part dealing with the generals was placed at the beginning. It was played up at the top of the first column, and to give it a greater air of authenticity, the byline of Otto D Tolischus was added.

On Monday the United Press sent the following dispatch from Berlin:

It was admitted in competent German quarters today for the first time that the Soviet military mission does not constitute a special mission—like the recent Anglo-French missions to Moscow—but actually constitutes a new Soviet military attache and staff. German quarters described Corps Commander Maxim A. Purkoyev as a "military attache with plenipotentiary powers."

The *Times,* needless to say, did not bother to publish a retraction. Instead it ran on page 2 of Monday's issue a radiophoto with the caption: "The German chancellor yesterday plunged Europe into war as he signed the refusal to cease the attack on Poland and enter into negotiations of the Corridor dispute," and below this another radiophoto: "Then he received Soviet Envoy Alexander Shkvartzev." There is no indication in the dispatches of the *Times* or any other newspaper that Hitler received the Soviet ambassador immediately after signing the refusal to end the war against Poland. This juxtaposition of events took place not in Berlin, but in Times Square.

War Called Off

THE theatrical unions, whose jurisdictional fight threatened to strike every theater, movie house, and many cafes in the land, have set an example to organized labor by agreeing on a logical jurisdiction which repudiates the attempted actor grab of IATSE, the stagehands' union. AAAA, parent body of the vaudeville actors' union, the American Guild of Variety Artists, has a clean victory, and the stagehands' dual union in the field, the American Federation of Actors, is now out of the picture. The IATSE muscle-in was not the wish of the rank-and-file stagehands but the act of autocratic leadership. Indeed, a possible result of the affair will be the overthrow of this leadership by the rapidly grow-

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ing independent Hollywood technicians union, the United Studio Technicians Guild, now awaiting certification by the NLRB. The USTG has CIO backing but no affiliation. George Browne, IATSE dictator, is further weakened by the Labor Day agreement, just as Hitler was tripped up by the Moscow pact, because the IATSE rank and file now sees four victories over Browne: the ouster of the gangster Bioff, the ouster of the gangster Nick in the St. Louis local, the growth of USTG, and the complete rout of the AAAA's army of invasion.

Mississippi Elections

SENATOR BILBO advocates a third term for President Roosevelt. Sen. Pat Harrison is dead set against it. The battle between these Democratic leaders in Mississippi was fought out in the gubernatorial primaries held last week. The New Deal won a decisive victory when the Bilbo-supported candidate, former Rep. Paul Burney Johnson, defeated Harrison's choice by a good plurality. The primaries were a significant index of the strong New Deal sentiment in the country today. Since nomination in these primaries is tantamount to election, the Bilbo-Johnson forces will be able to send eighteen pro-Roosevelt delegates to the Democratic convention in 1940. We hold no special brief for Senator Bilbo, whose vicious anti-Negro position is well known. But we feel that it is nonetheless significant that the openly anti-New Deal forces should have been routed in this early test of strength in the 1940 elections.

The Stolberg Way

BEN STOLBERG's greatest asset as a journalist is his ability to write libel with a cunning that keeps him and his employers free of court action and still smears those he wants smeared. It is no easy job, but it pays well. A lesser talent at legal slander would be useless to Roy Howard and Wesley Stout. In his articles on the CIO for both Scripps-Howard and the *Saturday Evening Post,* Stolberg did little more than damn the unions of which he wrote by constant reference to their leaders as Communists, "Stalinists," or "Stalinist-dominated."

It is Stolberg's contention, in his *Saturday Evening Post* article of September 2, that the CIO is weak and growing steadily weaker, a condition, he says, which is entirely due to the Communists within its ranks. To get this he takes for granted: (1) that the Communists are out to wreck unions and labor unity; (2) that the leader of almost every CIO union is somehow dominated by the Communist Party, as a member or otherwise; and (3) that the CIO lies about membership figures, which, by Stolberg's accounting, are a tidy 60 percent below what is claimed. From there it is a simple matter to say over and over what he has just said, extend the attack to the NLRB and New Deal, counting heavily on the cumulative effect of the Glittering Generalities which the Institute for Propaganda Analysis found to be Charles Coughlin's most effective oratorical trick.

To answer the Stolberg charges in every detail would mean the tedious business of going down the list of the fascist whoppers. R. J. Thomas, head of the CIO Automobile Workers, has already filed his disclaimer. Other union leaders will doubtless do likewise. It is enough to point out that a Trotskyite is once more doing the business of reaction. And there should be some gratification in the fact that if the CIO is as small as Stolberg claims, it is still large enough for the *Saturday Evening Post* to want to smash it. And that is a good deal, for even a reactionary must be in desperation before he takes a Ben Stolberg into camp.

The Communist Plenum

PEOPLE who have been trying to find their way through the fog of newspaper misrepresentation about the Soviet-German pact, and events in Europe generally, turn to the Communist Party. What do the Communists say? is a question that comes as a matter of course these days, even among people not wholly convinced of the full Communist position. And for members of the generation which lived through the First World War, what the international working class movement will do is of intense significance when the debacle of the Socialist and Labor International at the outbreak of the last war comes to mind.

The National Committee of the Communist Party held an enlarged plenary session last weekend in Chicago, Ill., commemorating the birth of the party twenty years ago in that same city. But it was more than a celebration of two decades of growth; this National Committee meeting shifted the fulcrum of discussion to the most recent events in Europe and the problems of the war.

The Communists agreed with the President that the United States must remain free from the imperialist rivalries and entanglements in Europe, although of course those are not the President's words. The war in Europe, the outcome of the Munich diplomacy of the last eight years, can serve the cause of democracy only if it really becomes a war for the national independence of Poland, for the liberation of the peoples oppressed by German fascism. Clearly, those governments responsible for the drift to war cannot be relied upon to prosecute it with vigor or effectiveness; only the accession of people's governments in both England and France is the guarantee of victory. The United States, its position strengthened in the Far East and elsewhere by the diplomatic action of the Soviet Union against the Munichers, has the great responsibility of collaboration with the Latin American nations and the Soviet Union to bring about a democratic (not a Munich) peace. But the foreign policy of the United States can only be effective if it flows from the domestic policies of the New Deal, extended and deepened as those policies must be if the people, not the tories, are to maintain power in 1940. That is why the Communists stressed national unity at this moment only on the basis of the policies of the New Deal, not on the terms of that same tory coalition which hamstrung the New Deal at the last session of Congress.

Browder Testifies

AFTER the parade of fascist would-be fuhrers, Jew-baiters, and stoolpigeons that have been given free rein to smear the New Deal and all progressive movements before the Dies committee, the calm and highly pertinent testimony of Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party, was a welcome relief. Browder made a real contribution to the committee's alleged purpose, the investigation of un-American activities, by revealing efforts of a group of wealthy Republicans to get the Communist Party to accept a $250,000 bribe to endorse President Roosevelt as its candidate in 1936. This bribe offer was first published in the pages of NEW MASSES in an article by Browder in our July 11 issue.

It is evident even from the fragmentary reports in the capitalist press that Browder was complete master of the situation. His exposition of Communist activities and principles gave the lie to efforts of committee members and counsel to brand the party as un-American. Their refusal to permit him to discuss the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, despite their repeated provocative references to it, is a confession of their own weakness and of the strength of the Communist position. Will the Dies committee follow up Browder's testimony and try to get to the bottom of the attempted bribe? We doubt it.

A. Markoff

ON TUESDAY, August 29, A. Markoff, director of the New York Workers School, was on his way to Atlantic City to take a much-needed rest. But death failed to take a holiday. Markoff died of a heart attack at the Pennsylvania station.

Markoff's death at the age of fifty-two is a serious loss to progressive education and culture. Associated with the Workers School since its founding in 1923, he had been its director since 1930. Under him it became the largest labor school in the country, with an average annual registration during the past five years of between eight and nine thousand students. Thoroughly trained in Marxist theory and practice, with the background of a revolutionary career that began in Russia in 1905, Markoff was one of those rare inspiring teachers under whom study becomes an exciting, creative process. Personally, too, he set an example of modesty, efficiency, and warm humanity. NEW MASSES joins with the many friends and students of A. Markoff in extending sympathy to his family and the school which he did so much to build.

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Censoring "The Grapes of Wrath"

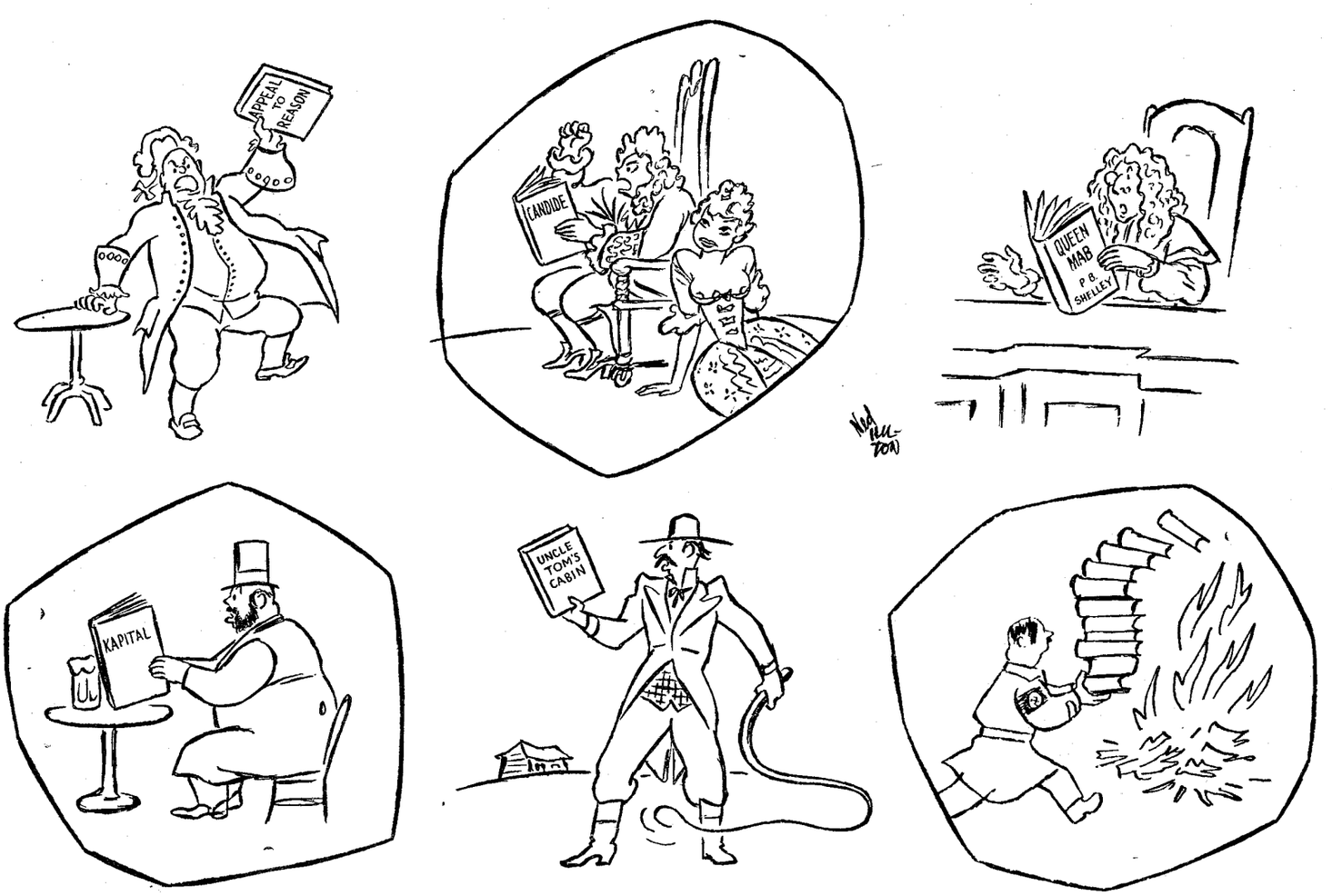
Samuel Sillen discusses the nationwide campaign to suppress Steinbeck's novel about migratory workers. Associated Farmers, Inc., hides behind Mrs. Grundy's skirts.

A CAMPAIGN to suppress *The Grapes of Wrath?* Seems a little absurd, on the face of it. How can you suppress a book that has already sold 200,000 copies? Few literate Americans have failed to hear of the book. The justified claim of the publisher that Steinbeck's novel is "the fastest selling, most highly praised, most fervently discussed" book of the year would seem to rule out any possibility of organized censorship.

It was comparatively easy to suppress Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* in 1900. This was Dreiser's first novel. When the firm of Doubleday, Page got cold feet and stored the entire printing of the book in the cellar, only a few of Dreiser's supporters, like Frank Norris, could know the difference. Cabell's *Jurgen* had sold only a few thousand copies when John S. Sumner, secretary of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, broke into the offices of the publishers, in 1920, and seized the plates of the book. Although *Jurgen* was catapulted into prominence by snooper Sumner, only the fringe of the reading public at the time could judge the merits of the case. Likewise, the suppression of Joyce's *Ulysses* involved a book which had been read in expensive bootleg editions by only a handful of people.

New times, new tactics. Bowdler, Mrs. Grundy, and Comstock operated in the horse-and-buggy age of censorship. The enlightened decisions in the *Jurgen* case (New York Court of General Sessions, 1923) and the *Ulysses* case (U. S. District Court, 1933) undermined the censor's reliance on his ancient standby, the courts. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Lord Eldon refused to protect by injunction Southey's *Wat Tyler* and Byron's *Cain*. The jurist expressed doubts (he hoped they were "reasonable") as to the innocent character of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. A jury held the publication of Shelley's *Queen Mab* to be an indictable offense. But recent American court decisions have challenged the ingenuity of the censors. They respect Hitler for his book-burning efficiency, and they are aping the master.

If they can't very well burn the libraries, they can at least spray them, as the California growers spray "surplus" oranges. Thus, the Kansas City Board of Education, by a four-to-two vote, has ordered all copies of *The Grapes of Wrath* removed from the city libraries. Miss Annette Moore, leader in the censorship forces, objected to the book's "portrayal of women living like cattle in a shed," and particularly to the scene in a boxcar where Rose of Sharon's baby is stillborn. "It portrays life in such a bestial way," laments Miss Moore. And nearly two thousand miles away, in the city of Buffalo, the book has been banned on the ground of "obscenity." According to Alexander Galt, Buffalo librarian, the book contains "vulgar words," and "a book is no place to put these words." It would be interesting



"It's obscene!"

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to know whether Mr. Galt permits the circulation of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Walt Whitman in his air-conditioned libraries.

Obscenity? Vulgar words? In the *Ulysses* case Judge Woolsey declared: "The words which are criticized as dirty are old Saxon words known to almost all men and, I venture, to many women, and are such words as would be naturally and habitually used, I believe, by the types of folk whose life, physical and mental, Joyce is seeking to describe." It is a characteristic of all moral guardians that they confuse their own corruptibility with the sound and healthy minds of those they pretend to protect. Commenting on *The Grapes of Wrath* in "My Day," Mrs. Roosevelt pointed out that there are coarse and brutal moments in the book, but that there are also coarse and brutal moments in life. She added that there are fine things in life which outweigh the brutal. These are beautifully portrayed in a book whose effect is to renew our faith in the masses of mankind struggling under the most adverse circumstances. Mrs. Roosevelt's robust attitude toward the book coincides with the reaction of most readers and critics.

But the librarians' charge of "obscenity" is a minor issue. The campaign against *The Grapes of Wrath* is motivated by a fear—justified, of course—that the conditions which it exposes will arouse the resentment of the American people. It is significant that, as I shall show, the attack on *The Grapes of Wrath* has gone hand in hand with an attack on Carey McWilliams' factual study, *Factories in the Field,* which contains no "obscenity" or "vulgar words." And it is noteworthy, above all, that the attack stems from the California growers and their Associated Farmers, Inc., who are directly responsible for the terrible plight of the migratory workers.

John E. Pickett of the *Pacific Rural Press,* organ of the Associated Farmers, also attacks Steinbeck because "He peeks into the privies of life." Commenting on this gem of literary criticism, the San Francisco *People's World* points out: "Now it is a matter of record and common knowledge that many authors have peeked into life's privies. *But what irritates Mr. Pickett is that Steinbeck has peeked into privies and found the Associated Farmers.*" Mr. Pickett, incidentally, in addition to being revolted by privies, coupled the names of Steinbeck and McWilliams with "Communist agitation."

Mr. Pickett writes about books; his playmates burn them. Last June, four thousand delegates of the American Library Association attended a convention in San Francisco. At just about this time, Librarian Robert Rea, who had ordered only one (1) copy of *The Grapes of Wrath* for the central library in the Civic Center, was giving specific instructions to the branch libraries not to catalogue or advertise the book. Here is the text of the note to branch librarians, as revealed by the *People's World* on June 2:

> You are going to receive *one copy* of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath. You will not receive the book jacket or catalogue cards for this book, and it will not appear in the monthly bulletin.*
>
> Since the book fund for the present year has been exhausted and next year's budget has been greatly cut, you will not receive any additional copies of this book, *regardless of the number of postcards you have.*
>
> You must use discretion in taking cards, explaining to the patrons that they will have to wait. *This book will not be kept on the open shelf when it is off reserve.* [My italics.]

Funds? According to the *People's World,* five copies of Kathleen Norris' latest love story were bought for the main library, only one of *The Grapes of Wrath.* Funds? Librarians in many California towns are refusing offers of local citizens to donate the book.

The San Jose library does not carry any of Steinbeck's works, according to Bob Work, student columnist for the *Spartan Daily,* newspaper of the San Jose Teachers College. (Steinbeck's mother was a San Jose schoolteacher. His wife hails from San Jose.)

The board of supervisors of Kern County, scene of much of the action in *The Grapes of Wrath,* has banned the book. Last week the Associated Farmers of Kern County announced the beginning of a campaign to extend the censorship on a statewide scale. I understand that they may change their tune, because of popular pressure. Progressives in Kern County discount the charge of "obscenity" and attribute the suppression to the expose of the lawless methods used by the corporate landowners to crush the exploited agricultural workers. The Oil Workers Union, Local 19, condemned the decision of the supervisors and praised Supervisor Ralph Lavin, who was elected with CIO and AFL support, for opposing the board's action. Dan Harris, editor of the AFL Kern County *Labor Journal,* denounced the decision. The county librarian, Gretchen Kneiff, explained that as an employee she had no choice but to remove forty-odd copies of the book from county circulation, and she hinted that a similar censorship was expected of *Factories in the Field.* Other unions took action: the Butchers Union, the legislative representative of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the Hod Carriers Union. Organizer Bill Bonar of the Hod Carriers said: "The attempted suppression of this book of Steinbeck's will only help advertise it more widely, but as far as we are concerned in the labor movement it is the beginning of a fascist regime. This helps to expose the faces of these local fascists." One union official reminded the mass protest meeting that last spring the neighboring city of Oildale refused to allow Marian Anderson to sing. Censorship never rains; it pours.

The following day, August 24, a meeting of a different sort was held in San Francisco. It was attended by members of Pro-America, the Hearst-sponsored association of Republican women. The delegates, reports Sue Barry in the *People's World,* arrived in limousines. Swathed in silver foxes, they assembled to "refute" *The Grapes of Wrath.* The literary experts: Harold Pomeroy, executive secretary of Associated Farmers; H. C. Merritt, Jr., owner of the infamous Tagus Ranch; Thomas McManus of the Kern County Citizens Committee; and chairman Ruth Comfort Mitchell, a wee bit of a novelist herself, wife of vigilante leader Col. Sanborn Young. Said Mr. Merritt, on the subject of "obscenity" of course: "What, after all, is a capitalist but a worker under another name?"

"There is no doubt," writes Gov. Culbert L. Olson in *Look* magazine (August 29), "that John Steinbeck's story, *The Grapes of Wrath,* has a factual basis, but it is a national story and by no means confined to California." Certainly it is a *national* story. That is why we must keep our eye on Kansas City and Buffalo as well as on San Francisco and Kern County. That is why *Collier's,* issue of September 2, devotes a lead editorial to the novel, charging that it "is propaganda for the idea that we ought to trade our system for the Russian system." What's Steinbeck kicking about, *Collier's* wants to know. Look how much worse off the "starving" Ukrainians are, and so on *ad nauseam.* This is a typical Red-baiting attack which, in the context of the other facts I have cited, underscores the existence of a nationwide movement to discredit and suppress the book. The extent of this movement is indicated by a letter from a sailor reporting that the book has been suppressed on the *U.S.S. Tennessee:* "Although there was a waiting list of over fifty men who wished to read *The Grapes of Wrath,*" he writes, "the chaplain removed it from the shelves of the ship's library."

The federal government camps in California have weekly newspapers printed by the migratory workers. According to Charles L. Todd (New York *Times* magazine, August 27), the Indio camp's *Covered Wagon* boasts: "We write what we say; we say what we think; we think what we darn please." This is the spirit of the American people. And in this spirit we cannot countenance the suppression of *The Grapes of Wrath.* Readers of NEW MASSES should investigate the situation in their local communities. Are your libraries making an effort to meet the demand for the book? Is an attempt being made to hinder its circulation? Let us know.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Children under Nazism

FIVE DESTINIES, *by Anna Reiner. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.*

THIS novel depicting the effects of Nazism on five children appears, by coincidence, less than a week after the Communist Party of Germany distributed leaflets calling for a "parents' front" to break Hitler's domination over the life of German youth. The Nazi regime, says the leaflet, has poisoned family life, set children against their parents, dragged them from their homes to serve the Nazi war machine. . . . All of which Miss Reiner, a German refugee, echoes in her sensitive, personalized account of the lives of four boys and

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a girl, all born in 1920, coming from sharply different households but brought together by school life and united in comradeship. Two of the boys are forced into the Hitler Youth, the Communist father of another vanishes into a concentration camp, and Heini, who has inherited humanitarian beliefs from his physician father, shares persecution with his parents. The girl, Manja, is a Jewess, and of course suffers most. It is in their efforts to protect her that the four boys manage to surmount the political hostilities of their parents and stick together. Her suicide separates them again, not in antagonism but the realization that their childhood is over and the old companionship is not enough.

The first half of *Five Destinies* is devoted to the children's parents and background, and in her portrayal of the already dislocated lives conditioned by frustration, ambition, and futile attempts to make personal relationships compensate for a larger dissatisfaction, Miss Reiner gives an intimation of the coming breakdown and chaos of 1933. One might wish that she had ended her narrative on a more positive note, that the interplay of harshness and tenderness had produced more than a sense of tragedy and revulsion. But the warning in this book—expressed in human, authentic terms—will not be missed by any reader.

BARBARA GILES.

Winston Churchill

STEP BY STEP, *by Winston Churchill. G. P. Putnam & Co. $4.*

THIS is a collection of fortnightly letters, spanning March 1936 through May 1939. Churchill represents the unreconstructed British reactionaries, chastened by the war, but shrewd, resourceful, relying on the traditional structure of might and morality to maintain Britain's dominant position in European and world affairs. He favors Franco Spain; but he knows full well that the conquest by Hitler and Mussolini represents a strategic blow at England. He seems not to understand the trials in Moscow, but allows "it is credibly and openly stated in France that the finance on which the Trotskyites depend . . . comes from Berlin." Abysmally misrepresenting the Soviet Union, of course, he is nonetheless impressed by its military might. After last March, he urges strongly that "not only must the full cooperation of Russia be accepted, but the three Baltic states . . . must also be brought in to associate." And again, "There is no means of maintaining an Eastern front against Nazi aggression without the active aid of Russia."

While criticizing the prime minister sharply, he always rallies around in the crisis, such as the moment before Munich, or the moment after the rape of Czechoslovakia. In the Nazis he recognizes Britain's eventual enemy; in Mussolini, Britain's potential friend. But even when most critical of the Chamberlain policy, his most forthright and reliable statement is not much more than a refrain that Britain must arm, must renovate her airforce and strengthen her fleet. An independent, clear-sighted, anti-Munich stand by Labor and Liberal forces, together with the Communists, could make the dissident Conservatives for whom Churchill speaks part of a powerful anti-fascist bloc capable of supplanting the untrustworthy Chamberlain government.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

American Prints

A TREASURY OF AMERICAN PRINTS, *edited and annotated by Thomas Craven. Simon & Schuster. $3.75.*

HERE are a hundred contemporary American prints, handsomely reproduced by offset in a looseleaf format. The selection by Thomas Craven represents a severe compromise in his prejudices; he could not quite bring himself to make it exclusively Benton, Grant, Marsh, Curry, and Wood, but selects good work by many other contemporaries, including William Gropper and several artists from the despised WPA. In a choleric introduction Mr. Craven slams into the baneful French school and denounces the Federal Art Project as a boondoggle, but finds a little of the New Deal sponsorship to praise because this part was due to Benton, Grant, Marsh, Curry, and Wood.

Tom Craven is a blocking back on the All-American-Art All Stars and his is strictly terrific in signal drill. Benton takes the ball at quarter, spins, and fakes to Grant Wood, who goes lumbering into the line, while speedy Jack Curry grabs the pill for a run around the enemy left end, with Tom Craven hurling himself heroically in front of the imaginary opposition. The Picasso Esthetic Club hasn't come on the field yet but the stands go crazy.

Mr. Craven invents a new term for his nationalist frenzy—"localism"—a kind of groping toward the socialist idea of autonomous culture, which the author has forbidden himself to look into because it would involve a bunch of wicked foreign thinkers. The prints are excellent.

JAMES DUGAN.

On the USSR

LAND OF THE SOVIETS: A HANDBOOK OF THE USSR, *by Nicholas Mikhailov. Lee Furman, Inc. $2.50.*

THIS book appears at an opportune moment. Readers fed up with the mess of lies, opinions, and distortions served up by the anti-Soviet press will find this a refreshingly simple and factual account of the USSR. Written by an outstanding Soviet geographer, the volume surveys the natural features of the country, its economic and social order, and, in separate chapters, the eleven constituent republics of the USSR. The geographical approach is a valuable preparation for the understanding of a land which extends from India to the North Pole, from the Baltic Sea to Alaska. The frontier line of the Soviet Union is one and a half times the length of

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the Equator and, as Mikhailov reminds us, when night falls over the western frontier it is daybreak at the eastern frontier. The great drama of socialist construction enacted in this vast arena is presented with scientific objectivity. The facts tell the story. One reads the book with a renewed appreciation of the creative energy of the Soviet people and their leaders. Radio commentators and newspaper columnists ought to be persuaded to study this handbook. It will sober them up. S. S.

St. Croix

STAR SPANGLED VIRGIN, *by DuBose Heyward, Farrar & Rinehart. $2.*

THE virgin is only the Virgin Islands. The "star spangled" refers to the New Deal, or, as Mr. Heyward's unreal Negroes "quaintly" call it, Noodeal—a semi-godlike creature who brings to St. Croix relief in the form of free food and clothing, a homestead plan which provides economic salvation for the islanders, and a brief, futile attempt to impose marriage on couples who prefer their own informal living arrangements. Practically all the characters are Negroes, and Mr. Heyward relies on them to provide warmth, earthiness, simple profundity, comedy, and related stereotypes which "sympathetic" white writers prefer to out-and-out Uncle Tom portraiture, although the effect is no less insulting and untrue. The brevity of the book is no excuse for its appalling superficiality.

B. G.

College Novel

DOCTOR'S ORAL, *by George S. Stewart. Random House. $2.*

FEW writers bother these days to examine the changes in college life since *The Plastic Age,* and the author of *Doctor's Oral,* if he hasn't made a profound novel of it, has made a witty one, close to the actual situation. He tells of Joe Grantland, impecunious graduate student, and the trials of his examination for a Ph.D., his intellectual student circle, and the peculiarities of the faculty, with which Mr. Stewart, himself a professor at the University of California, is most at home. The new candor and sobriety of student youth, in contrast to the ridiculous whoopee of the twenties, is detailed in *Doctor's Oral.* The author has made the Ph.D. quiz as suspenseful as a detective mystery and his characters are interesting enough to want further explanation.

J. D.

Masreel

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MGM Lays an Egg

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer is soon ready to release a slanderous film on the Soviet Union with Great Garbo and Melvyn Douglas. Description of "Ninotchka."

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER, Hollywood's richest company, has been conspicuously shirking in the current progressive trend of the American screen. Although a few passively democratic films like the Hardy Family and Dr. Kildare pictures have been produced, MGM pictures are usually notable for size, gusty ballyhoo, stars, and reactionary themes. *Idiot's Delight* was divested of its anti-war meaning and became a gesture of appeasement; *Marie Antoinette* was a two million dollar falsehood about the French Revolution; and one of the company's efforts for the late Jean Harlow, *Riff Raff,* held first place in the anti-labor field until the appearance of Paramount's *Our Leading Citizen.* While Warner Bros. and certain of the independents have awakened to the positive democratic theme, and have been handsomely repaid for the obvious gesture, Metro has stood aloof. Metro does not believe in propaganda. Indeed, Metro is not interested in making money, if we are to judge from their recent policy.

Two years ago MGM bought *It Can't Happen Here* for $50,000. For two years the company has kept the investment on the shelf despite repeated clamor from democratic organizations for its production. MGM tells Film Audiences for Democracy that the time is not "propitious." *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* rests beside it on the shelf because the studio does not wish to "antagonize" Turkey. A truthful screen version of Franz Werfel's book would antagonize no one but the fascists. A recent anti-Nazi script, *A Gentleman of Some Importance* by William C. White, has been converted into a straight romance and its locale shifted from Berlin to Paris.

Recently MGM, in keeping with its policy of friendship with foreign powers, extended its hospitality to ten Nazi editors, led by the editor of the *Voelkischer Beobachter,* A. Hitler, prop. No other studio in Hollywood invited the party, not even Paramount and 20th Century-Fox, the only other firms still doing business in Germany. About this time a Metro director named Richard Rosson returned from a trip to Germany, where he and his wife had spent several weeks in an Ostreich jail for filming "military sites." Mr. Rosson had been merely shooting backgrounds for a Metro film, *Florian* by Felix Salten, inmate of a German concentration camp. On the advice of Winfield Sheehan, MGM producer, Mr. Rosson says nothing of his adventure. In short, Metro can show Mr. Chamberlain a thing or two when it comes to kicking Hitler's boot with your teeth.

These incidents were occurring about the time Warner Bros. was sitting back watching the grosses pile up for *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* and *Juarez,* in which Warners had followed the reasonable business dictum of pleasing America's friends and horselaughing at the injured screams of the Nazis, including Fritz Kuhn.

However, there is one foreign power Metro does not fear—the one government on earth which stands unflinchingly for world peace, where anti-Semitism is a crime. Louis B. Mayer, MGM's chief of production, has long felt that the place should be thoroughly exposed. The late Irving Thalberg, MGM producer, agreed with this need and used to back people into a corner to tell his dreams of a picture to be called *Soviet.* But he could find no writers with the political background, as Trotskyism was practically an unexplored career in those days.

Metro is now making two pictures with Russian backgrounds, *Balalaika,* starring Ilona Massey and Nelson Eddy, about which little is known except the certain prospect that Mr. Eddy will wear a blouse and sing to Miss Massey, and a film called *Ninotchka,* about which we know a little more, having had a report on its sneak preview a few weeks ago on the Coast.

The producer of the film is Sidney Franklin, the director is Ernst Lubitsch, and the principal writers Charles Brackett, William Wilder, Jacques Deval, and a lady named Salke Viertel, an ex-actress from Germany. Mme. Viertel is the intimate adviser of Greta Garbo, who stars in *Ninotchka,* and is reputedly the only person Garbo trusts. The other players are Melvyn Douglas, Bela Lugosi, Ina Claire, and Sig Rumann, by no means a bunch of strolling players. MGM is sparing no expense to portray the Soviets. When you have scenes of Garbo and the entire May Day parade on Red Square you have an A picture.

For a firm so chary of propaganda and which finds the crisis hours of Hitler aggression an unpropitious time for unfriendly overtures, MGM certainly surprises you in *Ninotchka.* The story is being handled as a comedy, with touches of pity rather than scorn. The Soviet Union is revealed as a dull place, groaning under robotism, with primitive radios exclusively devoted to guttural Bolshevik orators. Its women are dowds, clothed in burlap, who live with six other girls in a room the size of a piano box, oblivious to the fact that their lucky sisterhood elsewhere loll about in boudoirs and change Chanel frocks several times a day. The food is mainly plain black bread, an egg is an Escoffier Society treat, and everybody is a spy.

The political implications are more reflective. There are several witty references to the Moscow trials, a peep into the mysterious Russian Soul as clinically described by General Ginsberg-Krivitsky, and the shattering revelation that Soviet diplomats run hog wild with champagne and cigarette girls as soon as they get off the reservation. The three Soviet commissars who serve as hirsute comic relief are forever popeyed at the magnificence of Paris, particularly an ornate hotel lobby, and they ungrudgingly confess they have nothing like it in Russia. This last aspect will considerably surprise those in MGM's audience who have seen the replica of the Mayakovsky subway station at the World's Fair. Greta Garbo plays a Soviet commissar, grim and unsentimental, who has been dispatched to Paris to check up on the three playboy commissars. Her innocent excess with champagne will scarcely be understood by those who are aware that the USSR now stands third in world champagne grape planting. Japan will be grateful for a couple of pointed slurs at the silk boycott, proving again Metro's friendliness to foreign countries.

In keeping with the vaunted Lubitsch touch *Ninotchka* is being handled as a good-humored jest, but the studio has hinted, nonetheless, that an official Soviet protest would help business. Garbo hasn't been making money in America for several years. She does much better abroad. Maybe German business will get that hypo it needs.

The three funny commissars have been sent to Paris to negotiate the sale of some confiscated crown jewels, because the USSR is in dire need of the money; for, as one of the characters explains, the Soviets are coinci-

Moscow a la Metro

GARBO, as a woman commissar, is shown in the picture in her Moscow tenement apartment, which she shares with two other girls, one a violinist, the other a street car conductor. The only decorations on the dingy brown walls are colored propaganda posters.

Beds are curtained off, for individual privacy. On a wooden table is a kerosene stove on which the community cooking is done, with food obtained through a ration card. A few Russian magazines and an ancient radio are the only recreational details. There is no plumbing. Bowls and pitchers are on each bedside stand. A community bathroom is at the end of the hall on each floor.

The set was constructed with what the research department believes is complete authenticity as no photographs were available.

—Hearst's New York "Journal & American" feature story on "Ninotchka."

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dentally trying to peddle fifteen Rembrandts in America and mortgage the Baku oilfields to London. But the Romanov duchess from whom the jewels were confiscated forestalls the sale and the Russians proceed to make treasonable whoopee in Paris. Then comes Ninotchka, in the person of Garbo, but she too falls for the wiles of Paris and for Melvyn Douglas, who plays a whimsical, fun-loving count. Garbo begins to learn some of the wonders of capitalism—a radio, the first she has ever seen, evening dresses, and night clubs. But her Russian Soul begins to hurt and she declares she is guilty of treason and should be shot—everybody confesses and is shot, she explains to the count.

After returning from a gay debauch, full of champagne, she lies down on the bed and is confronted with a frowning picture of Lenin on the night table. She calls him "Little Father" and recommends that he smile. Then comes an insert shot of the photograph of Lenin, which obligingly smiles back at her.

The duchess, played by Ina Claire, becomes jealous of this Soviet Galatea who is stealing her count, and blackmails Ninotchka into going home by offering to release the jewels. Garbo flies back to Russia. Now the story becomes concerned with a heavily satirical portrayal of life in the USSR, malicious and, of course, untrue, if anyone can still reply to these attacks with the truth. The count is worried that his precious has been shot down by Stalin and attempts to follow her. In a Soviet travel agency he is closely scrutinized for his politics and finally denied a passport. He is reunited with Ninotchka after he again seduces the three comic commissars in Constantinople and causes Ninotchka to be sent after them again. Now she decides to become a permanent exile with her lover.

The Soviet Union, it must be recalled, is the country most consistently friendly to America. The people of the USSR admire us: they have spent nine million dollars to acquaint Americans with their country at the World's Fair. They brought thousands of Americans to help them build their socialist industries. America has been the terminus of all their international flights. This month the great Red Army chorus will sing in America on its first foreign tour. The Soviet violin prodigies will come shortly after that. Mark Twain, Ernest Hemingway, and Theodore Dreiser are among their most popular foreign authors. They have made a film about Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. Paul Robeson, Marian Anderson, Harpo Marx, and Mary Pickford have been enthusiastically received all over the vast Union. The free development of the motion picture art in Soviet studios has contributed deeply to Hollywood's own development. The Soviet Union is now negotiating for the exhibition of *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* and *Juarez*. The ties between America and this great friendly people have never been stronger than at the time Metro has chosen to make *Ninotchka*. Such cultural ties, strong as they may be, are meaningless unless they are backed by a consistently amicable diplomatic relationship. Since the USSR was officially recognized in 1933, America has had no firmer friend.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer should recover some of its old business acumen. The Hardy Family series and the Dr. Kildare pictures have both expressed a wholesome democratic idea, and have been the company's best money makers. *Marie Antoinette* and *Idiot's Delight* were duds because they tried to substitute size for honesty. The progressive organizations which cry to heaven for the making of *It Can't Happen Here* are merely offering MGM a readymade audience on a platter. This is the same audience that is returning millions for *Juarez* and *Nazi Spy* and helping make a resounding flop out of *Our Leading Citizen*. This is the same audience that will make *The Grapes of Wrath* one of the biggest boxoffice hits. This audience extends all over the world. And this audience includes *170,000,000 people in the Soviet Union*.

A cogent example of the changing foreign market is the case of India. One of the staples of the English and American film has been the imperialist theme on India, a chauvinist subject that enrages the Indian people. This year the nationalist movement of Gandhi and Nehru began a concerted boycott campaign when Alexander Korda's picture *Drums* appeared. The picture was banned by censors in many cities. When the American film *Gunga Din* appeared the movement had grown strong enough to ban the picture in dozens of provinces and it became the subject of a condemnatory resolution by the Executive of the All-India National Congress. At this time the Indian people are prepared to boycott *all* products of companies guilty of anti-Indian films. A leading India film figure, Baburao Patel of Bombay, is now making a tour of film centers in the Occident, apprising producers of this fact. Already he has secured the verbal pledge of Alexander Korda that he will make no more Indian pictures without the supervision of Indian representatives. When Patel points to the fact that there are two hundred new movie houses established in India every year, plus an expansion of the audience by means of traveling projectors, producers will recognize that this is an audience worth wooing. All India asks is decent treatment. MGM has announced two films on India in their 1939-40 production schedule, *Kim* and *Soldiers Three*. The question is squarely up to Mr. Mayer: does MGM, "the friendly company," as its advertising claims, want to capture this audience or antagonize it?

Ninotchka is a most forthright propaganda film: I cannot remember a picture so industriously twisted back and forth to cover every single slander on socialism. The argument put forth by the company and believed by some of the progressives working on the film—that it is a genial ribbing of the USSR—is an obvious sham. The persons behind the picture, and they do not represent the real Hollywood, are making a contribution to the confusion of people in the middle of a world crisis, when

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merican national interests are closest to those the USSR. Lindbergh's lie about the rength of Soviet aviation was an important rt of Chamberlain's Munich plot. How such s defeat themselves later is proved in the uation a year after.

America and the Soviet Union are the two reatest military powers in the world. As the w world war begins MGM is found conibuting to the debasement of the screen and the lie that tries to keep us from an indisensable democratic ally, the Union of Soviet ocialist Republics.

ARKET REPORT

The popular juvenile whimsy, *The Wizard f Oz* (49 cents), has been converted $100,000) into a film with impressive sets $200,000), lilting music ($160,000), a huge ist ($500,000), beautiful costumes ($100,-00), deft direction ($50,000), and camera ork ($125,000), glorious technicolor ($110,-00), and bewitching technical effects $100,000). It stars charming little Judy arland as Dorothy ($50,000), Ray Bolger s the Scarecrow ($40,000), Frank Morgan s the philosophical Wizard ($60,000), Bert ahr as the Cowardly Lion ($50,000), Billie urke as the Good Queen ($25,000), and ack Haley ($40,000) as the Tin Woodman. he dance sequences ($75,000) are nimble nd entertaining, and the supporting cast $100,000), particularly Margaret Hamilton s the Bad Witch, is well picked. Mr. Lahr, Mr. Bolger, and Mr. Haley wear clever makeip ($10,000) by Jack Dawn ($5,000). The esult is put together and presented with fine MGM showmanship ($1,000,000), and adds ip to a wonderful ($2,900,000) treat for the whole family.

JAMES DUGAN.

A Screenwriter Speaks

Arnaud d'Usseau writes New Masses a letter about Hollywood.

The following letter from a Hollywood screenwriter is of such interest that we are printing it in full and inviting the opinions of other movie workers or critics of Hollywood. Mr. d'Usseau's remarks on the real place, and not the Hollywood of Edmund Wilson's peevish imagination, open up a subject New Masses is interested in pursuing further.—Ed.

TO NEW MASSES: Edmund Wilson, the literary critic, recently wrote a review in the *New Republic* of Nathanael West's new book, *The Day of the Locust,* prefacing it with some personal opinions regarding Hollywood in general and Hollywood writers in particular. It will be remembered that Mr. Wilson's last review of a book on Hollywood *(The Great Goldwyn)* was so replete with misinformation that a large section of the correspondence column in the *New Republic* was given over to correcting him. As I remember, among other things, Mr. Wilson accused George S. Kaufman of going Hollywood. In a brief reply, Mr. Kaufman took the trouble to say that he had never worked in Hollywood, and up to that time had only spent one short vacation here.

Mr. Wilson began his review of West's book by saying that "almost nothing good gets written about Hollywood. The authors who keep away from it don't know it. The authors who work there accept it; the authors who have succeeded in escaping don't want to put themselves on record for fear they may want to go back." He goes on to say that even people not interested in the movies have found it a difficult world to put on paper, and he even wonders whether or not the "insipid sun" has anything to do with a writer's inability to grasp the meaning of Hollywood. Mr. Wilson writes:

> Certainly a number of factors have combined to produce a state of mind in which it is difficult for the writer not only to register his reactions but even to have reactions at all. It takes only a few years of Hollywood to render him incapable of anything but turning up at the League of American Writers and delivering bosom-beating speeches, reminiscent of the Moscow trials, in which he repudiates the frivolity of his past career and excoriates the fascists in Spain, without ever, however, doing anything to expose that other campaign against art, education, and social justice, which is being successfully carried on by his employers no further away than Hollywood.

Mr. Wilson's ideas about the town have not changed since the year 1932, when, I am told, he last visited here. Mr. Wilson was then reporting a jittery America, at the bottom of the depression. Evidently he continues to jitter while the rest of us, who have conquered our nerves, are trying to come to grips with the real problems.

Mr. Wilson's reference to the League of American Writers is obviously a criticism of Donald Ogden Stewart's speech at the congress several years ago. But that organization has not been quite as ineffective as Mr. Wilson seems to think, and recently, with the inspiration offered by Stewart's speech and subsequent activity, the Hollywood chapter is proving itself one of the strongest branches of the parent organization in New York. Membership in the last two months has increased over 200 percent, a comprehensive, long-range program is being planned by the chapter, and anyone familiar with Hollywood knows that the league is beginning to fill a

Frank Davidson

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long needed want on the cultural front.

But the Hollywood chapter of the league is one of the youngest organizations in town. There are half a dozen others that have done a tremendous amount of effective and important work in the last four years under the "insipid" California sun. Actually very few bosoms have been beaten—and with Hollywood help through the Motion Picture Democratic Committee—was one of the most reactionary state machines in the country, and more recently, one of the most vice-ridden city governments; I refer to the defeat of Governor Merriam and the recall of Mayor Shaw. And though it is true that Franco was excoriated frequently and vigorously, it is also true that more than $75,000 went to aid the wounded and starving of loyalist Spain. Just as today thousands of dollars are going to help German refugees and Chinese combatants.

Mr. Wilson evidently felt his most penetrating barb was to declare that though any number of writers are willing to support loyalist Spain or oppose Hitler, they are unwilling to do anything about exposing "that other campaign against art, education, and social injustice." This, of course, is sheer eyewash. Along the organizational front, what about the trade union battle that has been waged by the Screen Writers Guild for the last two years and more, in which it is hoped that the writer will have more to say about his material than he has ever had in the past? And what of all the work that is going into Associated Film Audiences—an organization, it is hoped, that will eventually be as effective in its audience pressure on the producers as is the Legion of Decency?

But this is only a lesser point in Mr. Wilson's new batch of misinformation on Hollywood. What he primarily fails to see is that the Hollywood writer today is part of a whole progressive trend in the industry. Take *Juarez* and *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*. They have been cited again and again, but they are good object lessons for all those who seek to pass judgment on contemporary Hollywood. *Nazi Spy* has tapped whole new sources of revenue and influence in foreign countries, and producers as well as writers know this. Jack Warner recently published a statement that, contrary to the rumors going around town to discredit *Nazi Spy* at the boxoffice, the picture was doing very well and that Warner Bros. has two more propaganda pictures in preparation. "Propaganda" was Mr. Warner's own word.

These are the two most conspicuous examples of progressive pictures out of Hollywood. There are a score of others which do not reach the first-run houses, but which are played widely throughout the small town theaters of the country. Albert Bein wrote the script for the picture *Boy Slaves*—a picture so concerned with exposing social injustice in this country that the New York office of RKO had the film relegated to obscure circuits after it had created national interest with its first release.

There is no doubt that there is yet to be written a great book about Hollywood. It has been suggested often, and it may be that already such a work is in progress. As Kenneth Burke says, Hollywood is one of the three great focal points of America and represents the popular drama of this country as Washington represents politics, and New York represents finance. All three have national and international influence and a definite hold on the imagination of the people at large. The canvas is there, demanding to be painted. And because it is new and offers certain problems in technique and ideas, such a book, I believe, would be vastly more interesting than any book that would attempt to embrace all of Washington, or New York. Out here we have a great new art organized as an industry.

Writers coming to Hollywood fail to see this last point, and I think it is one of the chief things that account for their bewilderment or despair. They see life in Hollywood very much as they saw life in their home town, which is natural and understandable; their particular way of seeing life is the reason why they were brought to Hollywood in the first place; it is their investment as artists. But when it comes to understanding Hollywood and trying to mirror it, their particular viewpoint is fatal. Hollywood, to my mind, cannot be seen in terms of Peoria, or Springfield, or even New York. Hollywood is a world unto itself, with many radiating points. It is a world made up of electricians, carpenters, painters, extras, grip men, stunt artists, make-up experts. There are the saloons along Santa Monica Boulevard. There is Poverty Row along Sunset. On the fringe of the industry are the small, idealistic experimenters in *avante garde* films; at the core are the exhibitors throughout the country. Constant pressure comes from the influence of Los Angeles, from the control of the banks in New York, from the demands of the foreign markets extending to Europe and South America. Finally, there is a third of a century of history belonging to Hollywood of once famous stars, of producers who originally started out in the cloak and suit business, of German directors who are remembered more for their sadism than their very great genius.

Too, a writer who comes to Hollywood and is soon dissatisfied only sees pictures in terms of his own craft. He doesn't see it as a good playwright sees his work—in terms of acting, direction, production. Almost never does he try to understand the medium (camera angles, the relation of sound to film), and almost never will he admit that it is the greatest new art offered to us by the twentieth century. To new writers coming up, the motion picture can offer much in new methods of story telling. It already has. Not only are new techniques coming into existence, but audiences are today able to grasp story points and character far more rapidly because of the movies' influence.

It is my particular conviction that Hollywood is beginning to have its own standards and values. And as I have suggested, these values are beginning to have definite social

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implications reaching deep into our life in this country today. It seems to me correct and proper, for example, that a writer should not only exert all the influence he possibly can in making good pictures, but that he should exert pressure also from the outside through his trade unions and mass organizations. Mr. Wilson's opinions are not only out of date, but are the result of not working and fighting every day for the better things. He speaks without that understanding which comes from keeping one's eye fixed on the ultimate goal and at the same time meeting the day-to-day problems offered by the battle.

The phrase about a writer "going Hollywood" has come to have an ambiguous meaning. It really has nothing to do with Hollywood proper, or at least only when it happens to fit. As Meyer Levin pointed out in a recent article, there have been any number of American writers with promise and genius in the last twenty years who never came to Hollywood and yet were unable, after a certain period, to maintain the original standards they set for themselves. In its larger sense, going Hollywood simply means that an author takes on a greater financial and social responsibility than his talent can afford, and that after a time, to maintain his responsibilities, he must take his attention from his more serious projects to devote himself to grinding out second-rate material, whether it be for the movies, the radio, or the *Saturday Evening Post*. Although he had no swimming pool with hot and cold running water, you might say that when Robert Burns went up to London, he went Hollywood.

Along with my conviction that Hollywood is beginning to have standards and values that are large and important, it is also my conviction that there is a writer living within the vicinity of the Boulevard who is fully conscious of the danger of "going Hollywood." He may be working in the movies, perhaps not as a writer but as an extra or a member of the swing gang. At any rate he is keeping his integrity and constantly sharpening his observations and opinions against life as it is lived here. One day he will write the good book about Hollywood. Possibly there are a score of writers doing just this, and possibly there will be a score of good books. With the present ferment, I think it highly possible.

ARNAUD D'USSEAU.

Beatrice Tobias

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